

Namah Shiváya Shántáya

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Publisher's Note

Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti, the founder and preceptor of Ananda Marga, has said that human culture and civilization would not exist as we know them – perhaps would hardly exist at all – had it not been for Shiva. Shiva played a crucial role in propelling human society on a forward path in education, medicine, social code, music, dance, phonetics and, of course, intuitional science. And yet Shiva's stature is such that "Shiva can stand very well, shining in His own glory, quite apart from human culture and civilization."

In the human civilization that Shiva founded, Shiva's name lives on. It permeates the waking hours, from earliest infancy up until the final curtain, of nearly a fourth of the earth's human population. Yet the actual life of this great personality has long been lost to view, hidden under layer upon layer of myth. Many, for example, worship Shiva as a god, but fail to recognize Shiva as an historical person.

The author of Namah Shiváya Shántáya ("Salutations to Shiva the Tranquil") removes the veils of seven thousand years of history, to reveal Shiva the great spiritualist, Shiva the humanitarian, Shiva the pioneer of arts and science.

He felt great compassion for those afflicted people and, making them sit beside Him, advised them how to solve their physical, psychic and spiritual problems. Shiva used to live on a hill, and all kinds of people from far and near would flock to Him. He would call them with... His viśáña, His long horn...

Of the twenty discourses that constitute Namah Shiváya Shántáya, the first eight were given by the author in Calcutta as pravacans, or speeches (mostly at weekly intervals), in April and May, 1982. These eight were recorded on tape. The series (sometimes referred to by the author as a work of "Shivology") then resumed in Patna in the form of dictations given throughout June and July. The concluding dictation was given in Kashi, adjoining Benares, on August 13. All the speeches and dictations were given in Bengali.

The first editions of Namah Shiváya Shántáya, both in Bengali and in English, came out in 1982. The English Second Edition, in 1985, was a reprint of the English First Edition. In 1993, Discourse 1 and parts of Discourses 2, 4 and 5-8 were retranslated, closely following the 1982 translation, by Ácárya Vijayánanda Avadhúta and Ácárya Acyutánanda Avadhúta, for the English book Discourses on Tantra Volume One. In a similar way, the present Third Edition closely follows the 1982 or, where applicable, the

1993 translation. (Discourse 15 appears just as in the 1982 translation, and Discourse 1 just as in the 1993 translation.)

Footnotes by the translators have all been signed “–Trans.” Unsigned footnotes are those of the author.

Square brackets [] in the text are used to indicate translations by the editor-translators or other editorial insertions. Round brackets () indicate a word or words originally given by the author.

The author used a certain shorthand for explaining the etymologies of words. Under this system, a minus sign (–) follows a prefix, and a plus sign (+) precedes a suffix. Thus ava – tr + ghaiṇ = avatāra can be read, “the root tr prefixed by ava and suffixed by ghaiṇ becomes avatāra.”

date N/A

Shivagiiti (Song of Shiva)

*Jaya shubhavajradhara shubhra kalevara
Vyághrámbara Hara dehi padam;
Jaya Viśáñanínádaka kleshavidúra
Sarvadhiidháraka dehi padam;
Jaya Ádipitá Ádideva mantresha Mahádeva
Bhávátiita abhinava dehi padam;
Rajatagirinibha madhumaya durlabha
Ánanda amitábha dehi padam;
Jaya satya sanátana paramapadam.*

(Victory to the benevolent wielder of the thunderbolt, the one with white-complexioned body
Clad in tiger-skin – give me shelter at Your feet;
Victory to the blower of the long horn, the remover of all afflictions,
The Supreme entity in whom all intellect is sheltered – give me shelter at Your feet;
Victory to the First Father, the First Lord, the lord of mantra, the God of Gods,
Beyond thought, ever-new – give me shelter at Your feet;
One who looks like a silver mountain, full of sweetness, difficult to attain,
Blissful, infinitely radiant – give me shelter at Your feet;
Victory to the supreme, eternal truth.)

written by author when young

An Introduction to Shiva (Discourse 1)

When I spoke regarding Krśṇa⁽¹⁾, I said that His life can be divided into two main parts: the first part is Vrajagopála and the second part is Párthasárathi. I also said in that context that Párthasárathi was not as easily accessible as Vrajagopála was. I further said that the Mahábhárata⁽²⁾ was brought about by Krśṇa but it certainly did not encompass the whole of Krśṇa’s life. Krśṇa exists without the Mahábhárata, but the Mahábhárata does not exist without Krśṇa.

Regarding Shiva, we should say that His life cannot be divided in this way into two parts. From the very beginning, He was an omnipresent entity. Whenever, in the undeveloped and simple human society of those days, any need arose, Shiva was there to help; whenever any knotty problem developed, Shiva was there to solve it. So we cannot divide and analyse His life and personality into fragments, nor can we write the history of those times in that way. At the same time I feel constrained to state that, considering His unique role in building human culture and civilization, this culture and civilization cannot stand without Him. But Shiva can stand very well, shining in His own glory, quite apart from human culture and civilization. So to write history in the true sense of the term, for the sake of human society at present and in the distant future as well, Shiva cannot be neglected.

Let us first analyse the meaning of the term shiva. In trying to find the meaning of the word shiva, we must know whether or not the Sanskrit language was used in those days. Some people say that the Sanskrit language was imported to India from Central Asia, but this does not seem to be correct. Rather it is more reasonable to say that in those days one almost identical language was current all the way from Central Asia and Eastern Europe to Southeast Asia. The branch of that language that was popular in the southeastern part of that expanse was called Sanskrit, while the language that was spoken in the northwestern parts was Vedic.

The Aryans migrated to India from outside, no doubt, but the Aryan influence was not so discernible in the southeastern as in the northwestern parts of India. The Vedic language came to India with the Aryans, but the Sanskrit language is an indigenous language of India; it did not come from outside. I have stated this fact clearly in my recently-published book on Rárh.⁽³⁾

It is not at all possible to trace the exact antiquity of the Vedic language, because the only book that is available in that language is the ancient Rgveda, and the Rgveda was not in written form in those days either. The people of those days did not know how to read and write; they had no knowledge of any alphabet. They were not at all acquainted with the letters a, á, ka, kha,⁽⁴⁾ etc.

The alphabet – the Bráhmii script, the Kharośthi script, and the subsequent scripts born out of them – were invented some time during the last five thousand to seven thousand years. The Sáradá, the Náradá, and the Kutilá scripts were variants of the old Bráhmii script, and the Shriiharśa⁽⁵⁾ script is a variant of the Kutilá script. The script in which modern Bengali is written is the Shriiharśa script.

The composition of the Rgveda [began] about fifteen thousand years ago. Scripts were totally unknown in those days. It would not be incorrect to say that although the human race came onto the earth about a million years ago, its civilization started only about fifteen thousand years ago. This shows that human civilization and human culture are not very old in relation to the antiquity of the human race. We should not belittle civilization for being so recent, but neither can we venerate it as being very old.

In the days of Shiva, the Aryans started entering India from the northwest. Many of them had already arrived, many were on the way, and many were still making preparations to come. The Vedic language of the Aryans who had already arrived in India had exerted a widespread influence on the spoken dialects of the indigenous population of India, such as the Kash, the Scythians, the Euchi, the South Kuśán, etc. Obviously, Sanskrit, the common language of the indigenous people of the then India, was not outside the orbit of influence of the Vedic language; but that influence was not unilateral; that is, the Vedic language was also influenced by the Sanskrit language. Tantra had its origin in India, and Shiva gave a systematic form to it. Of course, Tantra in its Káshmiirí and Gaodíiya Schools did exist before Shiva, but in a scattered and crude form. So naturally one has to admit that Shiva was born and brought up in an environment of Tantra, although it was not classical Tantra.

Shiva was well acquainted with the Vedic language and the Vedic religion. Both in the Vedas and in the Tantric treatises, we come across references to Shiva, but not in very ancient texts, because it was not possible to put works in writing in very ancient times, due to the lack of knowledge of the alphabet. [Thus much material was lost.] The Tantric texts used to advise people, “You should do this, you should do that, you should hear and learn these lessons from your masters,” and so on; because in those days it was not possible to write books, as scripts had not yet been invented. The Vedas would also advise people in the same way – to hear and learn things from the masters. That is why the Vedas are called shruti in Sanskrit. Shruti means “ear”; so that which is learned by hearing is called shruti.

The period of Shiva was a most turbulent period in India. On the one hand there were the Aryans, the outsiders, and on the other hand there were the indigenous people, with their Tantra-oriented culture and religion. Into this conflict-ridden environment, Shiva was born.

Now, what is the derivative meaning of shiva? From the extant texts on Tantra and Veda and from all other written and unwritten sources, we get three meanings of the term shiva. The first and most important meaning of shiva is “welfare”.

*Anádyanantamakhilasya madhye
Vishvasya sraśtāramanekarúpam;
Vishvasyaekam pariveśtāram
Jiñátvá Shivaṁ shāntimatyantameti.*

[Knowing that Shiva, who has neither beginning nor end, who is the creator of this vast universe –
That multi-formed single entity who encompasses the whole universe – one attains eternal peace.]

Here shiva means “welfare”. Shivamastu means the same as Kalyánamastu [“May you be blessed”]. Kalyáñasundaram is the representation of Shiva embodying the true spirit of blessedness.

People say that He has been serving people, doing good to them, with five faces. He is described as having five faces: two on the left – Vámadeva and Kálágni; two on the right – Dakśiñeshvara and Iishána; and one in the middle – Kalyáñasundaram, the Supreme Controller which controls all the individual’s desires for action.

Dakṣīṇeshvara, the extreme right face of Shiva, is so called because He is showering dakṣiṇā [compassion] upon the created beings. That is the special role allotted to Dakṣīṇeshvara. Iśhāna – the face next to the right – is responsible for controlling all the jīvas, individual beings, with meticulous care. And Kalyāṇasundaram, the face in the centre, plays the role of controlling all the faces.

Now the question is, why is Kalyāṇasundaram assigned such a role? His only purpose is to promote the greatest welfare of all living beings; He has no other purpose.

In addition, Shiva has two faces on the left: Vāmadeva on the extreme left, and Kālāgni next to the left. Vāmadeva is terrible – rudra, rudrātīrudra, rudro'pirudrah – “one who teaches others by making them shed tears”. But the underlying purpose is to teach people, not to harm them. The other face, Kālāgni, also subjects people to excruciating torture, but there also, the main purpose is to teach them, to promote their welfare. Now here also, the two roles of Vāmadeva and Kālāgni are controlled by the central face, Kalyāṇasundaram. He is sundaram, beautiful, because He promotes kalyāṇa [welfare]: hence, “Kalyāṇasundaram”. He is terrible, but at the same time superbly calm and tranquil. Yet behind His apparent dreadfulness and tranquillity lies the kalyāṇasundaram bhāva [mental flow]. He is both severe and tender. He is tender, so naturally people love Him. Although He is severe, people still adore Him, because underlying His apparent severity, there is tenderness. Thus the role of Shiva is predominantly the role of a promoter of welfare. So the first meaning of the term shiva is “welfare”.

The second meaning of the term shiva is “cognition in its zenith status” – the zenith status of the Cognitive Principle, the Supreme Non-Attributional Process, the Supreme NonAttributional Entity beyond the faculties of all existential bondages. I will elaborate on these meanings as appropriate later.

The third meaning is Sadāshiva, who was born into this world about seven thousand years ago – and who, by His holy birth, consecrated, as it were, each and every dust particle of this earth and utilized His whole life for the sole purpose of advancing the cause of universal welfare. Remember, I have not said “human welfare,” because in our world, not only are there humans, there are also birds and animals, trees and plants. Shiva belongs to all; and for all living beings, He gave His all. Hence the people called Him “Sadāshiva”; sadā means “always”, and shiva – as I have said earlier – means “welfare”. So “Sadāshiva” means “one whose only vow of existence is to promote the all-round welfare of all living beings”. I will gradually tell you about this extraordinary personality. I hope you will deeply relish the discourses on this great man, this great personality.

Now the question remains: in the night of blinding darkness, do humans alone aspire to feel the soothing touch of light? No, all want it. All seek to grow out of the oblivion of existential darkness into the warmth of life, to experience finally the fulfilment of their life's urges. Up until this day, human beings have not made a proper appraisal of this great personality, this Mahāsambhūti,⁽⁶⁾ who gave human beings their first opportunity to experience the sweet joy of fulfilment of all their longings. No one has discussed Him much up until now.

Why people failed to make this appraisal is irrelevant today. It is the firm duty of every individual to know and evaluate the exact contribution of Shiva, and in this process of evaluation, we cannot ignore the personality Himself. One may derive some joy from a bright ray emanating from a shining entity, but without the entity itself, the bliss will not be complete.

11 April 1982, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) Namāmi Krśṇasundaram, 1981. –Trans.

(2) Literally, “Great India”. Here it means the campaign led by Krśṇa to unify India, and not the epic composition about that campaign. –Trans.

(3) Sabhyatār Ādibindu – Rāḥ, 1981. –Trans.

(4) The first two vowels and the first two consonants of Sanskrit. –Trans.

(5) Of the existing scripts in South Asia, the Shriihaarśa script is the second in antiquity to the Sārada script (Kāshmiirī script). A manuscript written in the old Sārada script can be found in the historical museum of the author's Calcutta residence.

(6) The special manifestation of Supreme Consciousness. –Trans.

Shiva – Both Severe and Tender (Discourse 2)

In my previous discourse I said that humans came onto this earth about one million years ago. But human civilization is at most fifteen thousand years old. If the first maṇḍala [chapter] of the ancient Rgveda is accepted as the starting-point of civilization, then the age of civilization will not exceed fifteen thousand years. But the civilization of those ancient days was not like the one we see in our times. The humans of those days merely followed a few rules and regulations in certain areas – no more than that.

Shiva was born about seven thousand years ago – about eight thousand years after the beginning of the composition of the Rgveda, that is, during the last part of the Rgvedic Age and the first part of the Yajurvedic Age. The civilization we see in the age of the Rgveda may be considered as pre-Shiva, and the civilization we find in the days of the Yajurveda as post-Shiva. From what we observe in the early and medieval periods of the Rgveda, we can conclude that a well-regulated social order was not yet evolved. Social life was not at all systematized. The matriarchal social system was in decline, giving way to the patriarchal system. Under the patriarchal social system, the patrilineal order and the patriarchal system function side by side. But in those days no fixed tradition had evolved. For instance, the matrilineal order persisted until the days of Buddha and Mahavir Jain – about 2500 years ago. At the time of Shiva, the matriarchal system was not very popular, but the matrilineal order was in full force. The existence of the patriarchal system naturally presupposes the existence of the patrilineal order, and to evolve a patrilineal order, the fathers must be identified in the society.

This is how the patrilineal order evolved: Each community used to live on a hill, and that hill was named after the headman, or the patriarch, of the hill. The days of the matriarch were already past, and in those days, the patriarchs were the heads of the groups. In Sanskrit, a hill is called a gotra. A particular community of people used to live on a hill, and a particular r̥ṣi [sage] used to be the acknowledged father or leader of that community, just as the gotramātā, the clan-mother, had been in the matriarchal age. For instance, there was a r̥ṣi named Mahar̥ṣi Káshyapa living on one hill; naturally that hill was named after him. Another r̥ṣi, say Mahar̥ṣi Bharadvāja, might be living on another hill; that hill would be named after him. This is how the system of determining one's gotra [clan] evolved. In each case, a particular sage or patriarch was the head of a gotra; this is how the patriarchal system functioned. The matriarchal system had already ended, but the matrilineal order persisted after that, until the time of Buddha, as I have said earlier.

Shiva did not give any particular importance to the matrilineal, matriarchal, patrilineal or patriarchal systems. He simply allowed people to grow in a natural way. But when it was necessary to maintain the patrilineal order, one's gotra had to be ascertained. Shiva advised His followers, "Don't create conflicts among yourselves in the name of gotras." Previously there had been frequent conflicts between clans living on different hills. Shiva banned those conflicts and told people, "Those of you who love Me, who obey Me, should accept the benevolent rule of a code of discipline. You should proclaim to the world, 'Henceforth, we shall no longer remain divided into various gotras, and erect artificial walls of separation among ourselves. Smashing all these barriers, we shall all sit and eat and drink together in the same compound, bound by the ties of one human family. We refuse to remain scattered in numerous clans – we, the followers of Shiva, belong to one gotra, Shivagotra: Átmagotrāṁ parityajya Shivagotrāṁ pravishatu [Leave your own gotra and enter Shivagotra].'" Shiva introduced this revolutionary idea into the then society and demolished all narrow sentiments such as geo-sentiment, socio-sentiment, etc. The exponents of those geo- and socio-sentiments immediately opposed and vehemently criticized Him.

In the social sphere, Shiva played a very active role in removing the distinctions among the members of society. Shiva had three wives – Párvatī, a fair-complexioned Aryan girl; Kálī, a dark-complexioned non-Aryan girl; and Gauṇḡ, a yellow-complexioned Mongolian girl. Shiva wanted to unite the people by obliterating social differences. He tried His utmost throughout His life to unite the then human society, scattered and fragmented into numerous groups and sub-groups, and lead it towards supreme fulfilment.

The human society of those days was not yet confronted with economic problems, so Shiva did not have to do anything in particular in the economic sphere. Politics had not yet crystallized in human society, so He did not have to do anything special in politics either. But there were other aspects of life which demanded His attention. Regarding the intellectual world, Shiva's clear instruction was, "Beware of those who want to divide people, those who try to erect walls of artificial separation between pure and simple human beings by encouraging narrow geo-sentiments and socio-sentiments. These people are lokavyámohakárakāḥ – they try to inject the diseases of narrowness into human minds – you should beware of them."

Shiva observed that in the days of the Rgveda, chanda [metre] was known, but rāgas and rāginiis [melodies of Oriental music] were not yet invented. Not just any composition with rhythm qualifies to be

called music! Suppose people are making dissonant sounds in a particular rhythm – that certainly will not be considered music.

There were seven metres in the Vedic Age, from the days of the Rgveda. Those seven rhythms were gáyattrii, uśíik, triśtup, anuśtup, jagati, brhatii and paunkti. The "Savitṛ Rk" [dedicated to Parama Puruṣa, Supreme Consciousness] in the tenth sūkta [composition] of the third maṇḍala of the Rgveda, is composed in Gáyattrii chanda. Sometimes people mistakenly call the Gáyattrii chanda, "Gáyattrii Mantra".

So the people of those days were acquainted with chanda, but not with the musical sura-saptaka [the Oriental octave]. After close observation, Shiva concluded that the sounds produced by various birds and animals maintain a harmonious adjustment with the undulations of the sound waves of the universe. The eighth step, the eighth note, of this harmony comes closest of all to the first note.

Based on the sounds of the seven creatures, Shiva evolved the seven musical notes. This musical sura-saptaka, which made the rhythm sweeter and more graceful, includes the sounds of śadaja [peacock], rśabha [ox], gándhāra [goat], madhyama [horse], pañcama [cuckoo], dhaevata [ass] and niśāda [elephant]. By taking the initials of the seven sounds – śa from śadaja, re from rśabha, gā from gándhāra, mā from madhyama, pá from pañcama, dhā from dhaevata and ni from niśāda, Shiva made the musical octave śa-re-gā-mā-pā-dhā-ni-śā. At the eighth step, the first sound of the octave is repeated, although in a different scale. In those regions of the world where the influence of Shiva was less, the eighth note of the musical scale is slightly different from the first.

Thus through permutation and combination, endless varieties of sound can be produced. So in Western music, we find do-re-mi-fa-sol-la-ti-do: in other words, "do" is repeated at the end of the scale. That is why, instead of sura-saptaka [literally, "seven notes"] Western musicians call the scale "octave."⁽¹⁾

Thus by inventing the seven musical notes, Shiva made the world of rhythms sweeter and more delightful. This was no ordinary achievement.

The music of the present-day world is entirely based on these seven musical notes. It is a matter of great regret that people have forgotten this science of music, whose foundation was laid by the intense efforts of Shiva. Nowadays, instead of considering music as a valuable asset to spiritual practice, they take it as a hobby, a means of livelihood, or a mere pastime. The arduous effort which Shiva invested in this science is conspicuously absent today. Some people lament this, saying,

*Ār ki Bhárate áche se yantra
Ār ki áche se mohana mantra
Ār ki áche se madhura karíṭha
Ār ki áche se prāñ
Sethá ámi kii gáhiba gán!*

[I wonder where in India are those perfect musical instruments –
Where are those charming notes?
Where is that melodious voice?
Where is the soul of music?
Alas, what music shall I sing there?]

To that my reply is: If the followers of Shiva make even one percent of the progress Shiva made, then India and indeed the world and the universe will surely regain that melodious voice and those charming notes. There is no reason for disillusionment. If people only develop their vigour, discipline and simplicity, and make intense effort, then success will come automatically. The lost treasure of the past will be fully restored to human society.

Shiva did not give a systematic form to music only – even to this day people utilize the fruits of His research in the field of phonetics. Phonetics depends on the science of breath, on inhalation and exhalation. Also on the basis of the science of breath, Shiva invested the world of rhythm with mudrá.⁽²⁾ He established harmony between rhythm and dance, and added mudrá to them.

In the pre-Shiva society of the Rgvedic Age, there was chanda, but no mudrá. In order to acquire proficiency in the study of the Vedas, the student had to master the six vedaṅgas, the six branches of Vedic knowledge: chanda [the science of metre], kalpa [explanation of rites], nirukta [lexicography], jyotiśa [astronomy], vyākaraṇa [grammar], and áyurveda or dhanurveda [the science of medicine]. This proves that the people of that time were well acquainted with chanda.

Then how did Shiva introduce mudrá in music? He observed that in the bodies of different creatures, the various glands were either over-active or under-active, either oversecreting or under-secreting. As a

result, these creatures expressed themselves in various ways. Shiva intensively researched all these factors, and finally invented mudrá. Each and every mudrá affects certain human glands in a particular way and thus influences people's minds accordingly. This was Shiva's contribution to the world of dance. In those days, people wrongly considered the random movement of the limbs to be dance; later, to this random movement of the arms and legs were added a few Vedic rhythms. But that certainly cannot be accepted as classical dance. Only after the addition of mudrás was it elevated to the status of classical dance.

Regarding the táńđava dance invented by Shiva, I will speak a bit later.

Then again, the mere beating of drums is not the art of vádyā [percussion]. This should be harmonized not only with chanda and the musical scale, but also with the rhythms and mudrás of the dance. Shiva Himself added all this to the art of percussion; prior to Him, it was completely unknown.

Shiva did not merely invent nrtya, giita and vádyā [dance, song and instrumental music]; He also spread the knowledge of music among the people. He selected Maharshi Bharata as an ideal candidate and said to him, "You must teach the science of music to anyone who wants to learn it, without any consideration of caste or community. You should consider only one thing: whether or not the person has the deep inner urge to learn." Shiva gave a systematic form and definite structure to everything which was not well-formulated until then. He provided a system not only for music but for each and every expression of human life, so that everything might progress in a rhythmic way, so that nothing would be done haphazardly.

Prior to Shiva, there was no system of marriage in human society. And as there was no recognized marriage system, the matrilineal order was in vogue, because it was easy to identify the mothers. In the case of the fathers, it was impossible to identify them. Shiva, for the first time, introduced the system of marriage which has continued until this day. The Sanskrit word for marriage, viváha (derived vi – vah + ghain), literally means "to follow a particular system". This system of marriage is known as Shaeva viváha. According to this system, the bride and the bridegroom will equally share full responsibility for their marriage, without any consideration of caste or community. Shiva was above all sorts of geo-sentiment and socio-sentiment.

Now to materialize any principle or ideology, one requires firmness, especially those who provide leadership to society, those who are the pioneers, the vanguard of a new movement. "We must keep the goal fixed before us, and keep moving towards the goal. We shall never deviate from our goal, whatever the obstacles or hindrances in the way. Once we start moving, we shall never stop or look back."

*Prárabhyate na khalu vighnabhayena níicaeh prárabhya vighnavihatáh viramanti madhyáh;
Vighnaer muhurmuhurapi pratihańyamánáh prárabhya uttamáh janáh na parityajanti.*

In this world, those people who do not start any activity for fear of opposition, are the lowest category of human beings. Those who start an activity but, when confronted with mighty obstacles, give it up out of fear, are the middle category. And those who start the activity and, when faced with obstacles at every step, defy and demolish them and move steadily towards their goal, are the highest category. They alone can achieve something substantial in this world.

Shiva was such a person. So He was severe – had He been lacking severity, He could not have accomplished so many noble deeds. But was He severe in every respect? As far as His ideology was concerned, He was severe – very, very severe. But in His external behaviour, in His dealings with people, He was very tender and soft-hearted. Before the advent of Shiva the people of this world had never seen such a perfect blending of severity and tenderness combined in one person. Thus all people, out of deep reverence, accepted His superiority on bended knees and with bowed heads.

*Tumi komale káthore rudravińńáy
Shánti sáyare sikta
Tumi páoyá ná-páoyár
Saba bedanár úrddhve
Sadá ácha nirlipta
Tumi madhuraśe pańśíkta.*

[You are tender and severe,
Holding your rudravińńá⁽³⁾
You are immersed in the Ocean of Peace,
You are above all feelings of gain and loss.

You are uninvolved,
You are immersed in the flow of bliss.]

Shiva's tenderness is proverbial. Whenever we meet a gentle and good-natured person, we say, "What a good person! He is as good as Shiva." But the same tender-hearted Shiva was severe also; and so He could show a new path to the world – an act for which the people of today, and of the future also, will be eternally grateful. In fact, as long as humanity lives, its gratitude will never end.

Now, Shiva's greatest contribution to humanity is the concept of dharma.⁽⁴⁾ Here it should be remembered that at the time of Shiva, many Aryans had already arrived in India, many were on the way, and many were still preparing to come. For those Aryans there was no clear-cut concept of dharma; they had no spiritual awareness or spiritual urge. Each r̥ṣi propounded his views differently from the others.

*Vedāḥ vibhinnāḥ smrtayo vibhinnāḥ;
Naekamuniryasya mataṁ nābhinnam.*

[The Vedas differ, the social codes differ; Each sage has a different opinion.]

As I told you a little earlier, each clan used to live on a separate hill, and the leader of that clan was respected as r̥ṣi of the clan. The affiliations of the gotra people were indicated by the name of that particular r̥ṣi. After the patriarchal system was established, the members of one gotra would forcibly kidnap women from other gotras to their own gotra, their own hill. Thus immediately after the marriage, the woman's gotra would change, because she was then a member of a different gotra, a separate hill.

All this invariably led the different clans into bloody conflicts. Those who were defeated in battle were captured as slaves and the women were taken to the harems of the victors. The victorious clan would then occupy the hill, the gotra of the vanquished clan. Thus within one gotra, there were many sub-gotras, called pravaras.

The women were forcibly carried away, their hands bound in iron chains. Even to this day, women in Bengal and some other areas wear iron bangles on their wrists after marriage – the symbols of their ancient servitude. One should clearly understand this. The males who would attack the neighbouring hills would tie up the women and carry them to their own hill. Even today, during the marriage ceremony in certain parts of India, the bride's clothes are tied to the clothes of the bridegroom. This enslavement of the defeated gotra was a great humiliation, especially for the women. Sometimes, during the battle, the men would strike the heads of the women with an axe, causing blood to flow. Up until the present, at the time of marriage, women use a vermilion cosmetic mark on their foreheads – a symbol of blood. However, Shiva, by introducing the Shaeva system of marriage, brought an end to this shameful chapter of human history.

We were discussing the dharmic way of life in those days. Whatever the r̥ṣis said, the other members of the clan would follow. The views of the r̥ṣis were called Ārśa Dharma ["Religion of the Sages", Aryan Religion]. The Vedas did not propound any systematic dharma. The Ārśa Dharma that developed in the above-mentioned process was merely a collection of the teachings of various r̥ṣis and munis [sages and scholars], and their teachings would vary according to changes in time. For instance, the Ārśa Dharma of the R̥gvedic period was different from that of the Yajurvedic period, and in the Atharvavedic period, it was even more different. So the Ārśa Dharma differed from one Veda to another. The system of incantation of mantras, and their pronunciation, also varied. For instance, the Bengali language mainly follows the Yajurvedic style of pronunciation, whereas Gujarati follows the R̥gvedic system; that is, pronunciation varied with changes in time. The incantation of mantras also varied, for example:

*Sahasrashiirśā Puruśaḥ sahasrákśaḥ sahasrapát;
Sa bhúmiṁ vishvato vrtvá'tyatiśthaddasháṁgulam.*⁽⁵⁾

Another Veda says,

Sa bhúmiṁ sarvato sprśtyá atyatiśthaddhashámgulam.

Still another Veda says,

Sarvato vrttvá'tyatiśthaddashámgulam.

So we see that mantras also varied from one Veda to another.

Furthermore, the non-Aryans, the original inhabitants of India who were not Aryanized, were made the slaves of the Aryans and were not even allowed to utter oṃ, the controlling mantra of the Aryan Vedas. Later, when the women lost their status, they too were not permitted to repeat the oṃ mantra. The non-Aryans and the women used to repeat namah instead of the oṃ mantra. The Ársá Dharma, the Aryan religion, was based on this discrimination.

In fact, the Ársá Dharma was not dharma at all – it was nothing but a geo-sentiment, sometimes combined with socio-sentiment. This continued for a long period. Shiva observed that this was not dharma at all. He looked deeply into human psychology and found that human beings do not really want happiness – they want absolute peace: peace is better than happiness. People do not attain peace by performing yajñas [sacrifices] nor by sacrificing animals in the sacrificial fire. They may please their palates by eating meat, but they will not attain peace in this way. Shiva showed human beings how to attain peace; and that path to supreme peace should not be called a path of ordinary attainment, but of supreme attainment. Here the spiritual realization is aparokṣānubhūti – is direct. This path, as shown by Shiva, is known as Shaveva Dharma

Of course, Tantra did exist before Shiva, but it was scattered, not well-organized. As I told you a little earlier, Shiva made everything systematic and regulated. He brought about a harmonious synthesis between those scattered Tantras and the people's spiritual urges for supreme fulfilment, and created His Shaveva Dharma, which was above all sorts of geo-sentiment and socio-sentiment. This path of Shiva, which was a happy blending of the existing Tantra and His practical processes, was an ideal adjustment between the objective world and the subjective world. In spite of that, this cult was not able to survive the ravages of time. One of the reasons was that in those days it was not possible to write anything down because script had not yet been invented. Knowledge was conveyed orally, not by writing. The Vedas could not be written due to the same difficulty.

Much later, when the Vedas were written down, many portions had already been lost. However much we may try to find those lost portions of the Vedas, they can unfortunately never be recovered. Many of the teachings of Shiva were also lost for the same reason, because people had no knowledge of the alphabet. This Shiva Tantra inspired people to move towards the supreme truth on the one hand, and on the other hand it exhorted people, "Do not neglect the practical world. Maintain a congenial adjustment with the external world." His instructions were, "Varttāmaneśu vartteta [Live in the present]. Try to penetrate as deeply as you can into your mind, keep moving inwards – Carāveti, carāveti [Proceed on, proceed on]. But do not forget the realities of the external world, because if you ignore the external realities, your internal peace will also be disturbed."

This Shaveva Dharma became the essential dharma of India. In this dharma no one was ignored – neither the non-Aryans – nor the women nor the untouchables.

In the Vedic Age, women as a class were neglected and treated as mere commodities of enjoyment; whereas in the age of Shiva they were proclaimed as a class of mothers. As the influence of Shiva was comparatively great in Bengal, there we still find the custom of addressing unknown ladies as Má ["Mother"]. In Bengali, aunts are called māsīmá [mother's sister], pishīmá [father's sister], etc.; that is, the word má is respectfully added when addressing women. And as the matriarchal system is still prevalent in Bengal to some extent, there the women are not altogether separated from the father's lineage. After marriage their gotra changes, no doubt, but they still have some relation with their father's lineage. For this reason a nephew, a sister's son, inherits the properties of his maternal uncle if he dies without heirs.

Shaveva Dharma is the dharma for attaining Parama Puruṣa, and thus there is no external ritual in it. It does not enjoin any ritualistic offering of ghee, or any sacrifice of animals' blood in yajña; it is not a path of self-gratification. The followers of Shaveva Dharma proclaimed in a thundering voice that dharma is the path leading to supreme attainment – not the path of animal enjoyment.

*Dīpta hayeche himśā-anal kalyāṇe mati nāi
Bhoga-hutāśhan jvaliche bhīṣāṇ sakali kariche chái.
Nāhi bhakti-kusuma kṣema nāhi udār snigdha prema
Shmashān-āndhār heri cāridhār kothay āloka pāi
Bhoga-hutāśhan jvaliche bhīṣāṇ sakali kariche chái.
Brthā yajiner anuṣṭhān shat nīsthur balidān
Dharmer bhāṇe vāsana dānavī mānavī mānave pūjīche tai.
Bhoga-hutāśhan jvaliche bhīṣāṇ sakali kariche chái.*

[The fire of violence has been kindled,
There is no desire for welfare in the mind.
The fierce flames of gratification, raging furiously, burn all to
ashes.
There is no flower of devotion, of benevolence nor of generous
and soothing love.
I behold on all sides the darkness of the burial ground –
Where will I find the light?
The fierce flames of gratification, raging furiously, burn all to
ashes.
Vain are the ritualistic arrangements
For a hundred cruel sacrifices;
In the garb of dharma people worship the demoness of desire.
The fierce flames of gratification, raging furiously, burn all to
ashes.]

The highest fulfilment of dharma is the channelling of all urges for action towards the *Iśta* [the Supreme Goal].

As I said a little earlier, Shiva was the combination of firmness and tenderness. In His practical life, He was tender, very tender – more tender than even a delicate flower. And Shiva admitted that human beings are liable to err – after all, they are human beings, not gods. Even the Vedic gods, like Indra, the god of energy and king of the gods; or Agni the god of fire; or Varuna, the god of water; etc., make mistakes – what to speak of ordinary human beings?

Shiva was well aware of human psychology. He believed that those who commit wrong today may rectify themselves tomorrow. If someone accidentally falls down today and gets his clothes dirty, why should he not be allowed to put on clean clothes tomorrow?

So Shiva said, "Those who commit wrongs – strike them with your trident. But the moment they rectify their mistakes, forgive them and take them affectionately on your lap." Whatever Shiva did was for the rectification of human beings. *Namah pinākahastāya vajrahastāya vae namah*: When giving salutations to Shiva, His devotees say, "O Shiva, wielder of the *pināka* [drum] and *vajra* [thunderbolt], I offer my salutations to you. Your thunderbolt is not meant to inflict pain on people; it is meant to reform them, to protect them from danger." The moment the erring people rectified themselves, He completely forgot all their faults, all their past misdeeds. So all sinful people, all penitent people, pray to Shiva on bended knees, "O Lord, who else but You will give me shelter? You are my *Bholanāth*⁽⁶⁾ – I committed so many sins, but as soon as I rectified myself, You forgave me. Oh, how quickly You became satisfied! You are really *Ashutośa* [Easily Pleased]."

When the Asuras, who were most hated by the Aryans, approached Shiva for protection from the Aryans, He readily gave them shelter. Who were these Asuras? In Central Asia, there was a country called Assyria, whose inhabitants were non-Aryans, and very hostile to the Aryans. The Aryans used to hate them intensely. Even today, some of the descendants of this Asura community can be found in the district of Palamau and some other parts of modern India. Asuras were not abnormal creatures fifty feet tall, with over-sized noses, ears and teeth. Rather they were ordinary humans, like us. The only difference was that they would not accept anything Aryan – the Aryan code of conduct, the Aryan religion, etc. Anything related to Aryanism was repugnant to them. This was the only difference between the Aryans and the Asuras, and for this reason the Aryans considered it an act of virtue to kill the Asuras. Those Asuras approached Shiva for shelter, and He granted it.

You may have noticed in some pictures that the Asuras are praying before Shiva and singing eulogies, and Shiva is granting them boons and coming forward to help them against the gods. Here "gods" means the Aryans, who were bent on annihilating the Asuras. Just as the present-day Aryans have almost succeeded in eliminating the Maori tribes of the Australian continent, just as the Aryans have almost succeeded in destroying some tribes in India, similarly, in the past, the Aryans wanted to exterminate the Asuras. But Shiva protected them. He would say, "If I do not protect them, who will give them shelter?" I do not accept that the Aryans as a race are superior and the Asuras inferior. No one has convinced me on this point.

Shiva was born in this atmosphere of conflict between the Aryans and the non-Aryans, but He always cherished a sincere desire that all the races – the Aryans, the non-Aryans, and the Mongolians⁽⁷⁾ – would live together in peace. In fact, He worked constantly towards that end. And to live in peace and harmony, there must be a supreme ideology accepted by all, because whenever there are ideological

differences, physical conflicts between individuals and groups are bound to occur, and peaceful social life becomes impossible. So Shiva held one ideal before them: "Remember, you are all the loving children of the Supreme Father, You are entitled to live in this world as the sons and daughters of one and the same Cosmic Father. And I am always ready to help you to establish yourselves in your right to cosmic inheritance and a truly ideological life."

18 April 1982, Calcutta

Footnotes

- (1) From the Latin word for "eight". –Trans.
- (2) Mudrás are subtle, symbolic gestures characteristic of Oriental dance. –Trans.
- (3) Shiva's *viiṇá* that produces sounds of tremendous vigour as well as sweetness. The *viiṇá* is a musical instrument similar to a sitar. –Trans.
- (4) Dharma means "innate characteristic". The essential innate characteristic of human beings is the urge to attain the Supreme through morality and spiritual practice. –Trans.
- (5) Rgveda *Puruśasúktam*. –Trans.
- (6) The Lord Who Easily Forgets (others' misdeeds). –Trans.
- (7) Since in ancient times Mongolia was an empire, and symbolized all of north and northeast Asia, "Mongolian" here means the Oriental, or yellow, race. –Trans.

Shiva – the Focal Point of Everything (Discourse 3)

I have said repeatedly that Shiva's jurisdiction was unlimited; in fact, everything relating to Shiva was ubiquitous. He did not leave any sphere of the human life of those days untouched.

One's life is determined on the basis of a few pulsations, and these pulsations depend on a specific number of inhalations and exhalations. The number of such inhalations and exhalations – on average, from twenty-one thousand to twenty-five thousand per day – varies from person to person. The process of breathing has a great influence on the human mind and self, or soul.

Suppose a person is running: his or her breathing immediately becomes heavy. In that condition he or she cannot think properly; the sensory organs such as the tongue, nose, etc., cannot function properly, and as a result one's perception is impaired. Actions are performed during the period of expansion, and perception occurs during the period of contraction. In the state of motion the period of contraction becomes too short to allow any clear perception.

Moreover, the process of breathing, depending upon whether the breath is flowing through the right nostril or the left nostril or both nostrils, influences people in various ways. It was Shiva who determined what kind of activity should be performed, depending on which nostril the breath was flowing through, and depending on whether the *idá* or *piuṅgalá* or *suśumná*⁽¹⁾ channel was active. He set down specific rules and regulations as to when one should undertake physical, psychic or spiritual activities. He further instructed when and in what circumstances one should do *ásanas*, *práñáyāma*, *dháráñá*, *dhyána*, etc. This science, which Shiva invented and developed, was known as *svara shástra* or *svarodaya* [science of breath control]. Prior to Him, the world was not aware of this science. Shiva also gave clear instructions how this science could be applied by people in the practical field of action. In fact, this *svara shástra* did help the people later to solve many problems in their mundane as well as spiritual lives. When doing a heavy job while breathing normally, a person might have serious difficulties – perhaps one's limbs might be broken – but in a state of *baddha kumbhaka*, or *púrña kumbhaka* [with the lungs full], one can easily do the same work. While doing some over-strenuous activity in a state of *shúnya kumbhaka* [with the lungs empty] one might even die.

Suppose you are climbing to a high place or lifting a very heavy load. If you do not follow the system of breathing while lifting the load, your hands may become painful or your bones dislocated. If you do the same work in a state of *shúnya kumbhaka*, you will have great difficulty – you may even collapse. If, on the contrary, you perform any strenuous activity in *púrña kumbhaka*, taking a deep breath, you can easily do it. All this comes within the scope of that *svaravijñána*. You might have read in the *Rámáyāna* that Hanuman, by taking a deep breath, made his body swell and lifted a whole mountain. Although it is a mythological story, it refers to the science of *svaravijñána*.

Now, if people dance according to the prescribed rules of *svaravijñána*, in harmony with proper *chanda* and proper *mudrá*, the dance not only becomes enjoyable to others and to the dancers

themselves, it also becomes quite a good exercise. And if at the same time that dance equally influences each and every gland, then those glands secrete the proper amount of hormones, which brings nourishment not only to the body, but also to the mind and the átman [the self, or soul]. Both males and females have a large number of glands in their bodies; males have a slightly larger number. All these glands need regular and proper exercise. Food alone is not enough; people need a special kind of exercise. The systematic and rhythmic dances invented by Shiva constitute those useful exercises. Now, all dances do not equally exercise all glands, and there are some glands which are not at all influenced by dances. In the absence of the proper exercise of those glands, people lose many capacities at an early age – especially the capacities of deep thinking and of sustained recollection. The mind has two main qualities – thinking and recollection. Both these qualities deteriorate in the absence of exercise of those glands, and there is no process for restoring them. Considering all this – considering the location of the glands, and the effect of chandas and mudrás – Shiva invented a unique and perfect dance: táńdava. As long as a dancer remains above the ground, he derives much benefit; when he touches the ground, then those benefits are assimilated by the body. That is why in táńdava there is much jumping, because jumping requires the practitioner to remain off the ground for a fairly long period of time.

The word tańđu in Sanskrit means “jumping”, so táńdava (tańđu + suffix śńa) means a kind of dance where jumping is a dominant feature. When paddy is husked by a wooden husking machine, the rice grains jump about, and that is why rice is called tańdula in Sanskrit. Uncooked rice is tańdula, and cooked rice is odana. (One whose rice is pure, that is, one who earns his bread by honest means, is called shuddhodana. Buddha’s father’s name was Shuddhodana.)

Anyway, it was Shiva who first introduced the táńdava dance. This was a unique invention which no one had ever thought of in the past; nor is it likely that anyone will find a substitute for this dance in the future. This táńdava dance, as I said a little earlier, was invented by the harmonious adjustment between chanda, mudrá and the glands. This dance is not only beneficial for the body, it also develops the mind and leads to spiritual elevation.

Shiva was not content with the mere invention of táńdava. In collaboration with His wife, Párvatii, He also invented various other types of dance and popularized them widely throughout the society. In the pre-Shiva days, dance meant simply a random movement of the limbs; but in Shiva’s time it was elevated to a systematic practice.

So you can imagine in how many ways Shiva promoted human welfare!

Since the advent of living beings on this earth, medicines have been used. Dogs, cats, snakes, mongooses – all animals, in fact all beings – need some kind of medicine in various conditions. When wild animals become sick, they rub their bodies against certain trees and plants to cure their ailments. This shows that all living beings are more or less acquainted with some types of medicine. Before Shiva, áyurveda [the Vedic school of medicine], was known to the people. As I have already said, there were six branches of knowledge related to the Vedas – chanda, kalpa, nirukta, vyákarańa, jyotiśa and áyurveda or dhanurveda. This proves that áyurveda was also in existence in India before Shiva’s time. But it had not developed as a systematic school of medicine. It was simply a collection of substances whose medicinal value was discovered accidentally. These substances, called muśńiyoga in Sanskrit, and tońká in Bengali, definitely have great medicinal value, but it was necessary to systematize them. This muśńiyoga, as an áyurvaedik school of medicine, was very popular in the ancient Vedic period, but it did not become a systematic science, a formal branch of medicine, in India until the days of Shiva. Shiva provided it with a definite form, and it became popularly known as vaedyak śhástra [Tantra-oriented medicine]. You should note that I am not using the term áyurveda in the sense of vaedyak śhástra.

It is necessary now to say something about the history of the social life of ancient India. Regarding certain important items of medical science, such as dissection, surgical operations and stitching, the Vedic school of medicine, áyurveda, did not make much progress. Later on, a group of Brahmans came to India from Sacdonia in Central Asia, the present Tashkent (Sákadviip or Sákaldviip in Sanskrit). Those Brahmans introduced the processes of surgical operation and stitching, and spread them among the Indians to some extent. But there is no evidence that the Sacdonians also knew the practice of dissection. One may argue against this, but it will be futile, for there is no conclusive evidence. Since the Sacdonians had refused to embrace Islam, they had to leave their homes and migrate to western India by sea. Along with them they brought two other things from overseas – cloves and palmistry. There are three Sanskrit synonyms for “clove” – lavańga, devakusuma and várisambhava: várisambhava means “that which comes from the other side of the ocean”. The second thing they brought with them was palmistry, which was part of astrology. This science of palmistry was not known in India either: the Sacdonians brought it with them from overseas. So its Sanskrit name is sámudrik vidyá, that is, “knowledge brought from overseas”.

After their arrival in India these Sacdonian Brahmans brought about some real improvement in the Indian áyurveda. All these things took place long after Shiva, about six thousand years after Shiva was born. But the vaedyak shástra which Shiva had invented already included dissection, surgical operations, stitching, etc.

The Aryans who migrated to India were full of vanity and highly egotistic. They not only declared the indigenous population of India to be Shúdras, but also refused to accept them into their society; they declared them to be "pariahs" or "untouchables". Even to this day in the Puranic society you will find three categories of Shúdras:

1. Ácarañíya Shúdras are those whose cooked food and drink can be accepted by upper-caste people, except those items which are boiled, roasted or fried.

2. Anácarañíya Shúdras are those from whom the upper-caste people will not accept any food and drink, but whose shadow can be accidentally stepped on without the need to take a purifying bath afterwards. Secondly, one is allowed to worship the deities in their houses without the fear of losing one's caste.

3. Antyajá Shúdras are those with whom the Aryans will have no connection; and if even their shadows are stepped on, upper-caste people will have to take a purifying bath.

Because of their extreme pride, the Aryans divided the indigenous population of India into these three categories, although these so-called Shúdras were the original inhabitants of India and the Aryans were the outsiders. When this was the social condition, how could the science of dissection continue? The non-Aryans could not touch the dead bodies of the Aryans because then the corpses would lose their caste! This superstition has persisted even to this day; it is not altogether non-existent even now. For the purpose of dissection, normally dead bodies are collected from the cremation ground, and obviously it is not possible to know the caste of those corpses. Perhaps the body may be of an Antyajá Shúdra or an Anácarañíya Shúdra – not all dead bodies are of high-caste people. Hence dissection was impossible, and medical science could not advance.

But Shiva was free from all these superstitions of casteism and untouchability, so He could easily propagate the science of dissection. Thus His science of vaedyak shástra advanced significantly in all those regions where caste distinctions were not very rigid, and where simultaneously the influence of Shiva was great, vaedyak shástra made remarkable progress, but those who practised it were treated as inferior by those Aryans who had migrated to India from outside.

The Sacdonian Brahmans who cultivated the science of áyurveda throughout India were accepted as Brahmans, although they were outsiders from southern Russia. Let me add one thing more in this connection. When the Puranic Age began in India, about 1300 years ago, all the Indian Brahmans who accepted the Puranic religion held a convention in Prayaga. In the Post-Buddha Age, the people who followed the Puranic religion said, "We accept the supremacy of the Vedas without reservation. We may or may not follow the Vedas, but we accept their authority." In fact those people were following the Puranic religion, not the Vedic religion, not the Ársa Dharma. This convention decided the criteria by which the Brahmans would be recognized: it was decided that those who were following the injunctions of the Vedas and the Puranic system of religion would be recognized as Brahmans, whatever might be their moral standard. Now, to disregard the caste regulations was a violation of the Vedic code of conduct. So those who touched the dead bodies of so-called untouchables, or dissected their bodies, would not be recognized as Brahmans. After long deliberation, the Prayaga convention decided to recognize ten classes of Brahmans, five from northern India and five from southern India. The five classes from northern India (called Paiṇcagaodíi) were: the Sárasvata Brahmans of the Punjab, Kashmir, southern Russia and Afghanistan; the Gaoda Brahmans of North Rajasthan and West Uttar Pradesh; the Kányakubja Brahmans of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh; the Maethil Brahmans of Mithila; and the Nágar Brahmans of Gujarat. The five classes from southern India (called Paiṇcadrávidíi) were: the Utkal Brahmans, the Traelaunḡa Brahmans; the Dravíd Brahmans; the Karńát Brahmans; and the Citpávan Brahmans of Maharashtra. None of the ten classes eat fish. The Rárhii and the Várendra Brahmans of Bengal, the Namboodris of Kerala, the Gaoda Sárasvata Brahmans of Konkańa, the Kraoiṇcadvípiis of Magadha, and the Sarayúpádíi Brahmans of the western parts of Bihar and eastern parts of Uttar Pradesh were not recognized as Brahmans at the Prayaga convention.

The Sacdonians had not arrived in India at that time, they came later; but later those Sacdonian Brahmans who studied astrology and áyurveda were also recognized as Brahmans. However, those in Bengal who studied the vaedyak shástra invented by Shiva were not recognized as Brahmans. The Vaedyas of Bengal were quite advanced in the knowledge of medicine, but as they had to touch dead

bodies during dissection they were not given recognition as Brahmans. Just imagine what a great injustice was done in those days!

So Shiva reorganized the whole vaedyak shástra and gave it a systematic form. This not only immensely benefited India, but later also brought about significant improvements in the alchemy, the alchemistry and the medico-chemistry of Central Asia. This was no ordinary achievement.

Shiva lived about seven thousand years ago. After His departure the Buddhist and Jain doctrines almost inundated the land of India. But even during the dominant periods of Buddhism and Jainism in India, Shaeva Dharma maintained its influence among the masses like a subterranean flow of water; it was quite discernible in Indian society.

Take, for instance, the case of Bengal. Perhaps you know that the original inhabitants of Bengal were divided into six groups. The Brahmans, the Kayasthas and the Vaedyas do not really belong to the mainstream of the population, they belong to the higher stratum of the society. The real people of Bengal were these six communities: the Kurmii Mahatos of western Rárh;⁽²⁾ the Máhisyas of Midnapur and 24 Parganas Districts; the Sadgopas of northern and central Rárh; the Rájavarñshiis of Varendrabhúmi; the Namahshúdras of the eastern Samataá and southern Dabák area; and the Chakma's of Upabaungga. Later the Chakma's were driven to the hilly regions by the Aryan colonizers. This was a great injustice to them. From then on the Chakma's mostly settled in the mountainous areas.

Even when Buddhism and Jainism were in their ascendancy, these original people of Bengal did not give up their Shaeva Dharma. Outwardly there may have been some influence of Buddhism and Jainism on them, but inwardly they remained Shaivites, followers of Shiva. You should remember this, for later you will understand its historical importance. In those days they used to observe certain festivals centring around Shiva, which Shiva Himself did not really teach them. Nor were those celebrations held during Shiva's time. But out of their great reverence and love for Shiva, they used to observe those festivals, which have continued in Bengal even to this day. If you observe carefully, you will find that these celebrations are popular mostly among the six groups of original Bengalees. Of these six communities, the Chakma's later accepted Hiinayána Buddhism, but the remaining five communities adhered to their original cult. Nowadays, they have no doubt accepted the Puranic religion, but in those days they were completely Shaivite.

One of those festivals is Caáaka. Behind this Shiva-oriented festival we find the dharmacakra of the Maháyána Buddhists. When Buddha first started preaching in Sarnath, he sat in a special mudrá and propounded the main thesis of his doctrine to five people. Of course, prior to that he had initiated Sáriputta and Mahámaodgalyan Arhan in Magadha, but he did his first actual preaching at a place near Benares called Sáraungganáth (the present name is Sarnath, and the still older name is Iishipattana Migadáva,⁽³⁾ or, in Sanskrit, Ráipattana Mrgadáva).

That special mudrá of Buddha is called dharmacakra pravarttana mudrá. To those first five people who heard his preaching, he said, "Always keep the wheel of dharma moving. Take care that it never ceases to move." These five disciples were Kaońdíńńa, Bappa, Bhaddiyya, Mahánám and Assaji⁽⁴⁾ (in Sanskrit, Kaońdílya, Bapra, Bhadreyya, Mahánám and Ashvajit). The practice of keeping the wheel of dharma moving is still prevalent among the Maháyánii Buddhists, particularly among the Tibetan Lamaists. Lamaism is a branch of Maháyánism. Even today, there is some influence of Lamaism in Bhutan, Tibet, Arunachal, Ladak, some parts of Nepal, Sikkim, and the Darjeeling District of Bengal. The Buddhists move the wheel and say, Ońm mańipadme hum, ońm mańipadhme hum. To represent this idea – the idea that the wheel is endlessly moving – an artificial tree is erected on which a bamboo pole is tied; that pole keeps revolving, thereby signifying that the wheel of dharma is moving unceasingly.

Cakra – cakkara – caáaka. The word caáaka has been derived from the original cakra. Formerly in Calcutta there were quite a few localities called Caáakaáaungga. This is how the Caáaka Festival originated, as a result of the combined influence of Maháyána Buddhism and the ancient Shaeva Dharma. The people of Bengal gave up Buddhism and embraced the Puranic religion only about 1300 years ago. The dharmacakra system of Buddhism is still retained, but the presiding deity of the wheel is no longer Buddha; it is Shiva of the Shiva Cult, because the influence of Shaeva Dharma was always present in the social life like a subterranean flow of water.

Now like Caáaka, there is another festival – Gájan. The common people spend the whole year in various routine duties, so they feel that they should set apart one particular day when they leave their mundane work and shout in the name of Shiva, Shiva he! The Sanskrit word for "shouting" is garjana. In Prákṛta, it is changed: garjana – gajjana – gájana. These festivals were not popular during Shiva's time: you should remember that they all came into being about 5500 years after Shiva, in the post-Buddha, post-Jain era.

Another popular festival is Jhánpán. Thorns, pointed iron bars, iron nails, etc., were spread in a place, and then people would jump on them and fall over them, but their bodies were not pierced. Part of this festival was the custom of revolving in the air, with the body suspended from a hook. As a result of the practitioner's intense devotion and love for Shiva, the mind becomes so concentrated that the nerves become temporarily numb, and the person loses all sensation of pain during that period. He or she does not feel pain even though there may be heavy bleeding.

King Vána of Varendrabhúmi (the northern part of Bengal) introduced this form of worship. In north Bengal, you will come across many places called Vánagarh, Váneshvara, etc., named after King Vána. He was a great devotee of Shiva, but he was born about 5500 years after Shiva. He himself used to practise this, so the system has come to be named Vánavidha Haoyá after him. This festival also was unknown during Shiva's time. There is yet another Shiva-oriented festival, Bolán, which is common almost everywhere in Bengal, but especially in the Ajay Delta of Rárh. With skulls in hand, the devotees dance and shout the name of Shiva and beg for alms while singing hymns to Him.⁽⁵⁾ This Bolán festival, although slightly influenced by Tantra, was not current at the time of Shiva. It also had its origin in the post-Buddha, post-Jain era. I have given a brief idea about these festivals because you are already aware of them. Now you understand the history of their origin.

[I will surely worship my Lord Shiva. The absolute, eternal and supreme essence of all.]

One more important thing needs to be mentioned. With the decline of Shaeva Dharma, Buddhism and Jainism emerged. Over the course of time, Buddhism and Jainism also began to decline; their philosophical base began to be eroded. During that critical period Buddhism and Jainism were declining and the newly-propounded Puranic religion was emerging. During this transitional stage in Indian history, a new doctrine, a new cult, emerged as a result of the synthesis of the declining Buddhism (which was popularly known as Baoddha Yogácára or Vajrayána at that time) and the rising Puranic religion (which was known as Shaevácára, though it had no relation to Shaeva Dharma). This cult was the Nátha Cult, Nátha Dharma. The word nátha used to be appended to the names of the preceptors of this Nátha Cult, such as Ádinátha, Matsyendranátha (who invented Matsyendrásana [spinal twist]), Miinanátha, Goraksánátha, Gohininátha, Caoraungiinátha, etc. This Nátha Cult had a large influence in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Bengal. Though much of Buddhism was accepted in the Nátha Cult, Shiva was the predominant god of the sect; but it had nothing to do with the actual Shiva or the Dharma He propounded.

Not only Shaevácára but other cults also blended with the declining Buddhism or declining Jainism. The Puranic Cult had five sub-cults in it – Shaevácára, the Shiva Cult; Sháktácára, the Shakti Cult; Vaeśhnavácára, the Viśnú Cult; Saorácára, the Súra Cult; and Gáñapatyácára, the Gáñapati Cult.

Gáñapatyácára emerged in the Maharastra area of western India at a time when Buddhism was starting to decay and the Puranic religion was on the rise. That is, a new cult arose centring around Gáñapati or Gañesha. During the same period, in some parts of Bengal, the Shakti Cult was emerging, which included the sacrifice of animals at the altars of the deities. In southern India, Shaevácára and Vaeśhnavácára emerged simultaneously. In Bengal, Vaeśhnavácára was yet to evolve.

Saorácára was popular only among the Shákadviiipii Brahmans. (As they studied astronomy, they accepted the sun as their planet-god).⁽⁶⁾ They were opposed to the Vedas. Wherever there is a greater concentration of Shákadviiipii Brahmans, there you will find sun-temples. Their sun-god is dressed in loose trousers like the Afghans, a loose jacket on his body, a rosary in his hand, a fez on his head – the dress of an Afghan Muslim. This sun-god is the presiding deity for the Shákadviiipii Brahmans of Central Asia.

Anyway, Buddhism and Jainism underwent great changes and were converted into sub-cults. In those days, Matsyendranátha of the Nátha Cult was a prince of Bengal. At that time the capital of Bengal was Maynamati – a place in the present Comilla District of Bangladesh. Maynamati is near the present Tripura State.

There was another famous yogi of the Nátha Cult – Bába Caoraungiinátha. In those days he had an ashram at a place which is now called Chowringee. As pilgrims had great difficulties on their long journey through the forest to the Kalighat Temple, he had his disciples build a broad road to Kalighat. That road was named after Caoraungii Bába – the present Chowringee Road. I am told that the present authorities are trying to change the name of this road. This is unfortunate; it is a distortion of history.

This was the transition stage. During this stage, Buddha and Shiva were often merged in the minds of the people because, as I said earlier, people at heart were Shaivites. If the society is likened to an enamel ornament, then Buddhism and Jainism were the enamel coating and Shaeva Dharma was the pure gold underneath. The idea of Buddha and Shiva together gave rise to the concept of Báfuka Buddha, which became changed into Báfuka Bhaerava by the followers of the Puranic religion. In Sanskrit

the word *batuka* has various meanings. One of the meanings is “greatest”. The Sanskrit word *batuka* became changed into *bađua* in *Mágadhii Prákṛta*, *baúá* in *Ardha-Mágadhii*, *baúyá* in old Bengali, and *boó* in medieval Bengali.

You should know that among the *Hiinayánii* Buddhists of the Chittagong region, this surname *Baúá* is very common. If you see anyone with the surname *Baúá* speaking Bengali, you can immediately conclude that that person must be a *Hiinayánii* Buddhist of the Chittagong area. Also among the Assamese who have adopted the Puranic religion, the surname *Baúá* can be found. Anyway, from the word *baúá* came the term *boó*. The people of Bengal have now accepted the Puranic religion. They have almost forgotten that the former *Batuka Bhaerava*, or *Boó Bhaerava*, has now been changed into *Boó Shiva*. Because of the close proximity in sound, *Boó Shiva* became *Buó Shiva*. As the people do not know the origin of the word – do not know that the *boó* is derived from the Sanskrit *batuka* – and as it is easy for anyone to understand the meaning of the word *buó* [“old” in Bengali], *Boó Shiva* became changed into *Buó Shiva*.

Perhaps you know that the *Sábarńa Choudhury* family were the zamindars [landlords] of Barisa of south Calcutta. In west Calcutta, they had a temple of *Boó Shiva*, and around that temple, a market for the sale of flowers, fruits and sweets grew up. The people would call the market *Buńá Bázár* – that is, the bazaar, or market, for the *Buńá Shiva* Temple. Now the name of the same bazaar has been changed to *Bańá Bázár*, due to the distorted pronunciation of the up-country businessmen settled in the market area.

These are the deities of that transition stage of Indian history. *Sadášhiva* of seven thousand years ago has no relation to this *Buó Shiva*; *Buó Shiva* is a Buddhist deity.

In the same way there evolved the concept of *Lokeshvara Buddha* as a result of the synthesis of the declining Buddhism and *Vaeśńavácára*. Sometimes, in specific cases, *Lokeshvara Buddha* was called *Bodhisattva*. His figure looked like *Viśńu*, but there was an image of *Buddha* affixed to the diadem on his head; this was the only sign to identify the *Bodhisattvas*. In the early days of the Puranic Age, *Lokeshvara Buddha* became transformed into *Lokeshvara Viśńu* and continued to be worshipped by the people. In a number of places I have seen images of *Lokeshvara Viśńu*.

At that stage there emerged another deity, *Bodhisattva Niilanátha*, as a result of a synthesis between the declining Buddhism and *Shaevácára*. I will explain the concept of *bodhisattva* a little later.

About 1500 years ago, the people followed Buddhism. In those days a mother desiring the welfare of her children used to worship *Bodhisattva Niilanátha*. Thereafter the Bengali people abandoned Buddhism and embraced the Puranic religion. Naturally *Bodhisattva Niilanátha* became transformed into *Shiva Niilanátha*. People thought since *Cańaka* worship was a worship of *Shiva*, though indirectly, and since *Niilanátha* was half *Shiva*, let us perform the *pújá* [worship] of *Niilanátha* one day before *Cańaka Pújá*. Accordingly, *Niilanátha* is worshipped the day before the last day of *Caetra* [the last month of the Bengali calendar] – which is the day on which the *Cańaka Festival* is celebrated.

In fact, there is a ritual for the worship of *Niilanátha* prescribed by the Puranic scripture; it does not require the ritualistic religious services of a Brahman priest, because the deity is half Buddhistic, half *Shaevácára*. Usually, the Buddhist mode of worship is this: the devotees, after coming to the place of worship, light oil-lamps, offer their salutations, and in some cases, chant a few mantras. The same procedures are followed in the case of *Niilanátha*. The worshippers come in the evening, light a few lamps, sprinkle some Ganges water, offer their salutations, and if they want to complete the ritual, recite some rhymed verses dedicated to the deity. That is, the mode of worship is still Buddhistic. As I have said earlier, lighting the lamps is part of the general mode of Buddhistic worship, and the same practice is followed in the worship of *Niilanátha*. Even now one can hear the village women say –

*Niiler ghare diye bati,
Jal khao'se putravati.*

[If you really want welfare for your sons, light a lamp at the shrine of *Niilanátha* before you drink water in the morning.]

A lady with a male child goes to the *Niilanátha* temple and leaves a lighted candle or lamp in the evening.

So this *Niilanátha* has no relation to *Shiva*. This is post- *Buddha Niilanátha*, post-*Buddha Shaevácára*. But people in general, particularly those six original communities of the Bengali population, were so intensely devoted to *Shiva* that they took *Niilanátha* to be *Shiva* and worshipped him with deep reverence.

I shall speak about the bodhisattva concept later.

Now when the Puranic Age arrived, the original Bengalees did not dare to worship Buddha directly, because of fear of the upper-caste people. A follower of Buddhism was required to follow the Three Jewels (Triratna): Buddha, the holy preceptor; Saṅgha, the organization; and Dhamma, the ideology – here Buddhism. The Sanskrit word dharma is changed into dhamma in Prākṛta. The philosophy that Buddha preached was called Shúnyaváda [the Doctrine of the Void]. According to him, everything of this universe is emanating from Shúnya [the Void], everything is maintained in Shúnya and finally everything will merge in Shúnya: Shúnyát agacchati, Shúnye tiśthati, Shúnyam gacchati – this is Shúnyaváda in brief. Shúnya means “zero”. So they would practise that dharma [i.e., Baoddha Dharma, Buddhism] worshipping a round-shaped stone which looked like a tortoise. A tortoise is round, that is, it looks like a zero, denoting nothing. This is how they would worship Dharmarāj (Buddha in indirect form, in a different name, in the name of dharma).

You will notice even today that Dharmarāj in most cases has been accepted as Shiva, for, as I have already said, the original Bengalees would secretly worship Shiva, even in the days of the dominance of Buddhism and Jainism. Gradually Dharmarāj was accepted as Dharma-Īhākura, that is Shiva. There are many temples of Dharmarāj or Dharma-Īhākura in various places, and the priests of these temples in most cases are not Brahmans, they are from the original Bengalees. Sometimes the Sadgopas, sometimes the Jelekaevartas [fishermen] are appointed priests of these temples. They too have the full right to perform the priestly duties, because Shiva recognized no caste distinctions – to Him, no one was Ācaraṇīya Shúdra or Anācaraṇīya Shúdra or Antyaja Shúdra. All were equally His loving children.

In Angadesh, people of all classes and castes, even Ācaraṇīya, Anācaraṇīya and Antyaja Shúdras, march in procession in the evening of the Shivarātri day and dance and shout, Hara Hara vyom vyom [a chant in praise of Shiva]. There is not the least expression of caste sentiment or untouchability.

There is one Dharmatala at Salikha in Howrah District and another in Calcutta city itself – Dharmatala Street. Recently, the name of the street has been changed, and thereby history has been unfortunately distorted.

Anyway, there was an intermediate stage when some sort of synthesis took place between the declining Buddhism and Jainism, on one hand, and the Puranic religion, on the other. During that transitional period Shankaracharya was born – the main propounder of the Puranic religion. So that the Puranic religion he propounded would receive a spontaneous and warm response from the general mass, a very psychological attempt was made to proclaim Shankaracharya as an avatāra [incarnation] of Shiva. Is this not, in truth, a pseudo-sentimental strategy? The fact is that Shiva had an unprecedented influence over the mainstream of the population of Bengal and India. Hence it became necessary to declare Shankaracharya an avatāra of Shiva, so that the simple indigenous people of India might accept the doctrine of Shankaracharya, without any reservation, as the words of Shiva. This occurred about 1300 years ago.

25 April 1982, Calcutta

Footnotes

- (1) Idá, piṅgalá and suśumná are three nádíis or subtle nerve channels. When the breath flows through the left nostril the idá is active; when through the right nostril, the piṅgalá is active; when through both nostrils, the suśumná is active. –Trans.
- (2) Rárh is the territory, mostly in Bengal, from the west bank of the Bhagirathi River to the Parasnath Hills. –Trans.
- (3) In the Pali language. –Trans.
- (4) In the Pali language. –Trans.
- (5) Vandaná kariba ámi Shivere ámar Yini púrúa, yini nitya, yini sárátsár.
- (6) Súra, the sun-god. (Súra is also the common noun for “sun”.) –Trans.

The Pervasive Influence of Shiva (Discourse 4)

Is Shiva a philosophy or a personality or a deity? We must first say a little about Shivatattva [the inner meaning of Shiva], devatátattva and daevii shakti, and then analyse Shiva and the other gods and goddesses who are claimed to be related to Him. There are deep-seated questions in human minds about this, but all the questions remain unanswered.

Shiva was a great personality. At the same time, His entire life – we may say, His very way of life – is a philosophy. And when one's personality becomes fully identified with one's philosophy of life, one becomes a god.

*Dyotate kridate yasmát udyate dyotate divi;
Tasmát deva iti proktah stúyate sarvadevataeh.*

[The vibrational manifestations emanating from the Supreme Nucleus are known as devatás, and these devatás address that Supreme Nucleus as Deva.

He with His powers vibrates the entire universe, makes the entire universe dance; and He by dint of His occult and supra-occult powers brings everything back onto His lap.]

The endless expressions of life emanating from the Universal Nucleus which move all-pervasively in and through everything of the universe and influence all entities are called devatás [deities, gods and goddesses]. Shiva's ideology is totally identified with His life, with His way of life. Hence, Shiva is definitely a devatá.

Now while we are discussing devatátattva [the inner meaning of a devatá] we must add something more. Normally, each and every expression that emanates from the Supreme Hub, the Cosmic Nucleus, is a devatá. In that sense, Shiva is not merely one such devatá; He is the aggregate of these devatás. Shiva is no doubt a god, but the word "god" does not encompass the totality of His personality. He is not only a god, He is the God of gods – Devatánám devatá, devanám devah ityarthe Mahádevah ["The God of all gods and goddesses is Mahádeva"]. Shiva is Mahádeva.

Now it is necessary to discuss those entities who were involved with Shiva, such as Párvatii, Kálii, Gaṇḡá, Sarasvatii, Lakśmii, etc.; and all the other gods and goddesses of Shiva Tantra, Buddhist Tantra, Jain Tantra, Post-Shiva Tantra and the Puranic religion. First we shall find out how much Shiva was related to them from the philosophical, social and personal points of view – or whether there was any relation between Him and them at all.

In this context, the topic of daevii shakti must be discussed. When some wave of expression emanates from the Universal Hub and moves in the process of systalsis, two main forces are active, Prajñátattva [the Cognitive Force] and Shaktitattva [the Operative Force]. The former is called Citishakti, and the latter is called Káliká Shakti. It is called Káliká Shakti because the Operative Force maintains Her creation through kálacakra, the eternal time factor. (This has nothing to do with the deity Kálii.)

Now, to discuss Shivatattva, devatátattva and daevii shakti, we must review briefly a long period of history stretching over seven thousand years. In the field of applied Tantra that was popular during Shiva's lifetime, there were different forces, no doubt, but they were not deified into gods and goddesses. So to say something about gods and goddesses, we must go back still further. In the Vedic Age there were gods and goddesses, but there was no system of idol worship. People used to worship those gods and goddesses through sacrificial rituals. Indra, Ágni, Varuṇa, etc., were all Vedic gods, but they were not worshipped with idols. Nor was there any system of worshipping Parama Brahma [the Supreme Entity] with idols. It was said that Iishvarasya pratimá násti ["There cannot be any finite pratimá, image, of God"]. Pratimá means "duplicate", something identical to the original. Suppose there is an eggplant. If we create an object exactly like the original eggplant, we say that the second eggplant is the pratimá of the original eggplant. But as there is no other entity like Parama Puruṣa, Parama Puruṣa cannot have a pratimá. Tulá vá upamá Kṛśṇasya násti ["Kṛṣṇa has no parallel or equal"]. These were the ideas of the Vedic Age.

Next came the age of Shiva Tantra. In those days, many káliká shaktis [deities] were accepted, but there was no idol worship. Then followed the age of Shivottara [Post-Shiva] Tantra, during the Buddhist and Jain period. During that period, various systems were introduced for worshipping different gods and goddesses in the form of idols; and the metamorphosed Post-Shiva Tantra that came subsequently (metamorphosed because it was Shiva Tantra but largely influenced by Buddhism and Jainism) continued to promote the worship of the deities of Post-Shiva Tantra, but now introduced their worship in the form of idols as well.

In this context, one important thing has to be mentioned. Buddhism, three hundred years after the death of Buddha, was clearly divided into two groups, (1) Mahásámghik, and (2) Sthavirvádii or Theravádii. Some time afterwards one more branch, Sammitiyya, was created, but it did not last long. The Mahásámghikas used to call themselves Maháyánii Buddhists, and the Sthavirvádii, Hiinayánii. The former is called the Northern School of the Buddhist Cult, and the latter is called the Southern School of the

Buddhist Cult. The Maháyána is called the Northern School because its jurisdiction was Tibet, China, Mongolia, Outer Mongolia, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, NEFA [Northeastern Frontier Agency], southern and eastern Russia, Japan, and Korea. The Sthavirváda is called the Southern School of the Buddhist Cult because its jurisdiction was Sri Lanka, Chittagong of Bengal, Burma, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, etc. Gradually the gap between them widened more and more. The scriptures of the Southern School were written in Pali, that is, Mágadhii Prákrta. And the scriptures of the Northern School were written in simple Sanskrit, although Buddha gave his teachings in the Pali language.

The Maháyána School of the Buddhist Cult was further sub-divided in the course of time into two groups – Mantráyána and Tantráyána. Considering the psychological needs of the people, the followers of these Mantráyána and Tantráyána sub-cults invented various new Buddhist gods and goddesses. Later on, the Tantráyána group was further divided into two sub-groups, Kálacakrayána and Vajrayána.

During the days of Vajrayána and Kálacakrayána, there was a philosophical upheaval in Buddhism; this upheaval was not for the good, but it was definitely a change. The philosophy that Buddha preached was Duhkhaváda, a kind of pessimism. According to Buddhist doctrine, there are Four Noble Truths: Caturájjasaccam. These four Noble Truths are – (1) There is suffering; (2) There is a cause of suffering; (3) There is cessation of suffering; (4) There is a way to the cessation of suffering. Due to the influence of Duhkhaváda, Buddhism became estranged from the practical world. But during the days of Vajrayána and Kálacakrayána, which were propounded about 1600 or 1700 years ago, the Buddhists made a departure from their old doctrine and preached a new philosophy which was known as Atisukhaváda.⁽¹⁾ During those days, the followers of the Buddhist Cult prayed to Buddha to provide them with various objects of pleasure. The propounders of this doctrine conceived of a stage of Buddha named bodhisattva, the stage immediately preceding enlightenment, or in the intervening period between unenlightened humanity and the state of enlightenment.

People conceived of Paiṇcabuddha, the Five Stages of Buddha, with the expectation that Buddha in his different stages would grant them different objects of enjoyment. And within the practical world, the various operative forces through which the activities of Buddha and the Bodhisattva were performed were known as Paiṇcabuddha-shakti. Anyway, the Maháyána School of the Buddhist Cult arrived at this condition during the days of the Kálacakrayána and Vajrayána. Vajrayána was very popular in East India, particularly in Bengal.

Now, we must say something about Paiṇcabuddha, Paiṇcabuddha shakti, and bodhisattva. In accordance with the doctrine of Atisukhaváda, the followers of the cult would ask for objects of pleasure. They used to cover the face of Buddha with gold. In similar ways they created five other Buddhas – Akśobhya, Amoghasiddhi, Amitábha, Vaerocana, and Dhyániibuddha – these are the main Paiṇcabuddhas. Later their number increased, according to the demands of the people. Along with Paiṇcabuddha, Paiṇcabodhisattva, the Five Bodhisattvas, were also created.

People explain bodhisattva in various ways. Generally we find, in ascending and descending order, two meanings. The first one is: one who is gradually proceeding to the state of enlightenment, buddhatvá, but has not actually become Buddha. And the second is: an enlightened being who has voluntarily assumed a worldly form just to maintain a relationship with the external world.

And as I have already said, those active forces which helped Buddha in his work were called Buddha-shakti. Originally they were five in number, but later their number increased, according to the needs of the people. Those who were worshipped at the early stage were: Ugratárá, who was worshipped in India; Bhrámariitárá, who was worshipped in China; Vajratárá, who was worshipped in Tibet (Kímpuruśavarśa, as the land was called in those days); Vajrayoginii; and Vajraváráhi. They were all very popular during the days of Vajrayána.

Though it may be a bit irrelevant, I should still say that in the age of Vajrayána the Buddhists used to sacrifice human beings in order to gain material boons from the deities. During the period of Vajrayána in India, particularly in Bengal, thousands and thousands of innocent people were sacrificed in order to propitiate Vajrayoginii, Vajratárá, etc.

Anyway, to these five Buddha-shaktis were later added other deities, like Hárítii, Máricii and Shiitalá, a laokik goddess.⁽²⁾ Manasá also joined the host; initially she was also a laokik goddess. Many of these deities of Buddhist Tantra were later accepted in Post-Shiva Tantra, and conversely, many of the goddesses of Post-Shiva Tantra were accommodated in Buddhist Tantra. Thus there was a continual process of mutual exchange.

Besides these deities, there were many laokik deities, such as Maṅgalācāṇḍī, Olācāṇḍī, Banabibi, Shaṅkaṭācāṇḍī, Kālurāy, Dakṣīṇarāy, Suvacanii, etc. People used to worship them out of fear. Many of them were later accepted in Buddhist Tantra, and many were included in the Puranic religion also. This was the host of gods and goddesses who were popular in India during the Puranic Age.

As I have already said, when philosophy and personality become identified, together they produce a devatā. Shiva's uncommon erudition, His unmatched dynamism, His dexterity in action, and, at the same time, His own philosophy (there was no written philosophy then – it came only at the time of Maharshi Kapila) – all these things together elevated Shiva to the status of a devatā. In fact, people made Him a devatā, for they came to depend on Him in all respects. In this situation, it was but natural that they should venerate Him as a devatā.

Now in the course of time, when Post-Shiva Tantra evolved, Shiva was still a devatā, but the Buddhist and Jain Tantra of that time exerted some influence on His image, and, by adding some new elements to the existing image of Shiva, tried to create a new entity. Sometimes, in the Puranic Age, Shiva was invested with a sacrificial thread, but in reality Shiva never had any thread on His body; if He had any, it was a thread of snakes.

Later, many gods and goddesses were brought to the scene and linked with Shiva, because until an entity's relation to Him was established in one way or other, that entity would not get any recognition at all. Take for instance the goddess Manasā. Sometimes she is said to be the daughter of Shiva, but in reality, there was no goddess named Manasā or Viśahari at the time of Shiva. In the Puranic Age, it was declared,

*Āstikasya munermatā Vāsukiibhaginī tathā;
Jaratkārumuner patnī manasāyae namo namah.*

Manasā was said to be the mother of Āstika Muni and the sister of Vāsukiināga and the wife of Jarātkāru Muni. We will not raise any objection to the statement that she was the mother of Āstika Muni, but we cannot accept that she was the sister of Vāsukiināga. There is a story in one Purana that she was the sister of Vāsukiināga,⁽³⁾ but according to another Purana, Kadru was the mother of serpents and Maharṣi Kāshyapa was their father. In that case the father of Manasā is Kāshyapa. Then how can she be the daughter of Shiva? So the Puranas are mutually contradictory. In fact, Manasā has no relation to Shiva; Manasā is only a laokik goddess and was recognized as such in Buddhist Tantra and the Puranic religion. Shiva, however, was a great personality about seven thousand years ago, whose existence does not depend upon the tales of the Puranas. The Puranas were composed about 5500 years after Shiva.

After Manasā, let us take the case of Pārvatī. What is the meaning of the word Pārvatī? Some may derive it as Pārvatasya duhitā, pārvatasya kanyā (using śāsthī tatpuruṣa⁽⁴⁾) – that is, "daughter of a hill". Obviously the question will arise, and quite logically, how can a human girl whose body is made of five fundamental factors be the daughter of a hill? A river may be called the daughter of a hill, but in the case of a human girl we cannot say that. So the derivation of Pārvatī as pārvatasya kanyā is not logically acceptable; rather, the proper derivation is Pārvatadeshiyā kanyā ityartho Pārvatī (using madhyapadalopī karmadhāray⁽⁵⁾): "a girl born in a hill state". So when people say that Pārvatī was the daughter of the Himalayas, it does not mean that she was the daughter of a person named Himālaya, but that she was a person born in the Himalayan Range. This Pārvatī was fair-complexioned; that is, she was an Aryan girl.

In the then India, the mutual relations between the original inhabitants of India (Austrico-Mongolo-Negroids) and the outsiders, the Aryans, were by no means cordial. The Aryans, out of deep-rooted contempt for the indigenous people of India, used to call them sometimes asuras, sometimes dānavas, sometimes dāsas, sometimes śūdras.⁽⁶⁾ The Aryans did not accept these people in their society; rather, they declared them to be outcastes. But these ancient people of India, of Austrico-Mongolo-Negroid blood, had their own civilization and culture. They were also developed people: they had their science of Tantra, and their medicine. There was a prolonged conflict between these people and the Aryans. Pārvatī was the daughter of an Aryan King, Dakṣa, who ruled in the Himalayan regions. Many people were hopeful that after the marriage between Pārvatī and Shiva, the relations between the Aryans and the non-Aryans would improve. During the period of the vow of penance that Gaorī (another name for Pārvatī) undertook in order to attain Shiva as her husband, she used to dress in the fashion of a Shavara girl (the Shavaras were one of the non-Aryan communities). She used to stitch turmeric leaves together to make improvised outer garments. One of the Sanskrit words for "turmeric leaves" is pañña. As she would wear pañña as her clothes, she was called "Paññashavarī". Later, after she became successful in her penance, people requested her, "Now please set aside the turmeric leaves and wear fine clothes."

When she actually discarded the crude turmeric leaves, she was nicknamed "Aparná". Unfortunately, even after the marriage between Shiva and Párvatii, the relations between the Aryans and the non-Aryans did not improve; rather they became more strained – the conflicts became more acute than before. Gaorii's father, Daksha, and the Aryans continued their slanderous campaign against Shiva, and finally, to humiliate Shiva, they held a yajiṇa [sacrificial ceremony] to which Shiva was not invited. Párvatii went to attend the yajiṇa, and unable to bear the insults to her dear husband, immolated herself in the sacrificial fire.

*"Kśánta hao go pitá Shivanindá ár sahe ná
Kuver yár bháñdárii Brahmá Viśnú dvárer dvárii.
Ami tánri ájiṇákárii jeneo ki ta jána ná."*

"I am a follower of Sadáshiva, the brilliance of whose divine presence outshines even the dazzling brilliance of the jewels of Kuvera's⁽⁷⁾ treasury; whose unmatched dexterity in creation excels even that of the Creator Brahmá himself; whose unequalled love surpasses even that of the Dissolver Maheshvara himself; in whose loving shelter not only humans, but also animals and plants, feel absolutely secure. You certainly know this. I cannot bear this insult to Shiva any longer. Stop, Father, stop!" After that self-immolation the relations between the Aryans and the non-Aryans improved.

This Gaorii or Párvatii had no relation whatsoever to the Puranic goddess Durgá whom people worship nowadays. Gaorii, or Párvatii, was a human girl, and as such, she had only two arms. The ten-armed goddess Durgá, who was a deity of the Puranic Age, has nothing to do with Shiva or His age.

The worship of the goddess Durgá is based mainly on the Márkañdeya Puráña, and to a lesser extent on the Devii Puráña, the Káliká Puráña, the Brhatnandikeshavara Puráña, the Duragábhaktitaranginii, the Deviihágavat, etc. None of these books is older than 1300 or 1400 years. Seven hundred shlokas [couplets] were collected from those books and gathered together, and that constituted the abridged Márkañdeya Puráña, which is also known as Durgásaptashatii, or more colloquially, Shrii Shrii Cañdii. None of these works existed at the time of Shiva; they have no relation with Him.

There are some people who believe that Durgá is the wife of Shiva, but this is not logically proved by any scriptural evidence. Shiva had only two arms, not four or six. Párvatii also had two arms. But Durgá is a Puranic goddess, and the author of puráña [educative fiction] can create in his imagination as many arms of Durgá as he likes. Nobody can object to this.

No system for the worship of Durgá is prescribed by the Vedic scripture; so to put a Vedic seal of approval on the worship of Durgá, the famous Deviisúkta of the Vedas is cited. But Haemavatii Umá [Durgá is sometimes also called Umá], who is mentioned in the Deviisúkta of the Vedas, has no relation whatsoever to Párvatii (or Gaorii), the wife of Shiva, nor to Durgá, the Puranic goddess. People have been thinking erroneously that Durgá was the wife of Shiva, but in reality she had no relation to Shiva.

Yes, Shiva did have a wife – Gaorii, or Párvatii. And another wife was Káliká, or Kálii. Kálii was born in a non-Aryan community which was ethnically Austrico-Mongolo-Negroid. Now you may wonder about Kálii's appearance. Why is she undressed? Why is she sticking her tongue out? There are many tales about these matters, but you must not give any importance to these stories; you must discover the real history behind these things.

One of Shiva's wives was Gaorii, who had a son, Bhaerava. "Bhaerava" means "one who practises Tantra sádhaná [spiritual practices]". Another wife of Shiva, Kálii, had a daughter, Bhaeravii. "Bhaeravii" means "a woman who practises Tantra sádhaná". Bhaeravii learned the process of sádhaná from her father and practised it regularly.

But Bhaeravii's mother, Kálii, always feared that her daughter might encounter some trouble while out doing Tantra sádhaná, so one night she went in search of her daughter. At that time Shiva was deeply absorbed in meditation in the cremation ground. Kálii, while walking along the path, tripped over Shiva. She felt extremely contrite and stuck her tongue out.⁽⁸⁾ Shiva was roused from His meditation, and asked, Kastvam? – "Who are you?" Now, Kálii was deeply embarrassed, but being Shiva's wife, how could she conceal her identity by introducing herself as Bhaeravii? A woman cannot identify herself to her husband by the name of her daughter. So she identified herself by saying Kaoverii asmyaham – "I am Kaoverii."⁽⁹⁾ Since then, Kálii has had another name – Kaoverii. The Sanskrit word is "Kaoverii", but sometimes people wrongly spell the word in Bengali as "Káverii".

Later Káliká Shakti, also called Kálii, was accepted in Post-Shiva Tantra and also in Buddhist Tantra as a Tantric goddess. Still later, in the Puranic Age, this Kálii was worshipped as a goddess, and at that

time she got a second name, Shyámá. But this Kálii, or Káliká Shakti, has no relation to Kálii the wife of Shiva. Kálii the wife of Shiva existed seven thousand years ago; but Kálii the deity accepted in Post-Shiva Tantra and Buddhist Tantra goes back only 1600 or 1700 years. The worship of Kálii the deity is preached chiefly on the basis of the Káliká Puráña, so it has nothing to do with the Vedic Age nor the age of Shiva. But one thing should be remembered: that although she is a deity of Post-Shiva Tantra, she was accepted and worshipped in Buddhist Tantra also.

And in the same way,

*Meghavarṇā vigatavasānā,
Shavashivārūdhā shyāmā trinayanā;
Narashirakhadgavarābhayashobhanā,
Caturbhujā Kálii Kálikārúpiṇī.*

Kálii, the deity, has four arms. But Kálii the wife of Shiva had two arms, not four. So Kálii the goddess who is worshipped these days according to the Puranic system is not the one who was Shiva's wife.

Not only that, there is also a difference in meaning between kálii and shyámá. First, it is a fact that Kálii or Shyámá, who is worshipped as a goddess nowadays, has no relation to Shiva. Then, regarding her colour, in one part of the shloka she is described as meghavarṇā ["having the colour of a cloud"], that is, grey-black (Kálii the wife of Shiva was a non-Aryan girl, so she may have been that colour); then again she is described in the same shloka as shyámá. The word shyámá in Sanskrit has two meanings. One meaning is "green". Kálii, who is grey-black, cannot be shyámá in this sense; there would be an inconsistency in meaning, a contradiction in the shloka itself. The second meaning is

*Shiitakāle bhaveduśṇā griṣme ca sukhashiitalā;
Atasiipuśpavarṇābhā sā shyāmā parikiirtitā.*

"One whose sweet behaviour enables one to feel warm even in winter and cool in the summer, one whose body emits the glow of the atasii flower (that is, a golden colour), is called shyámá." By this definition of shyámá also, the foregoing shloka would be self-contradictory.

So we find that neither the goddess Durgá worshipped nowadays nor the goddess Kálii, is the wife of Shiva.

No goddess having eight or ten arms can be the wife of Shiva: He had only two arms. Similarly the Káliká Shakti having four arms cannot be the wife of Shiva.

Shiva had a third wife – Gauṇḡá. She was a Mongolian girl with a yellow complexion, born in Tibet. I said a little while ago that Gaorii had a son, Bhaerava, and Kálii had a daughter, Bhaeravii. Gauṇḡá had a son – Kárttikeya, or Kárttika, or Sanmukham, or Śádánana. (In Tamil Saṁmugam, Bálasubrahmaṇyam or Murúgam).

Bhaerava, the son of Párvatii, was an ardent spiritualist, a Tantric sádhaka [spiritual practitioner]. Bhaeravii, the daughter of Kálii, was also an ardent spiritualist and a sincere practitioner of Tantra; but Gauṇḡá's son, Kárttika, was of a different mould. Because of this Gauṇḡá was very sad at heart; she was very unhappy with her only son. To remove Gauṇḡá's mental unhappiness, Shiva used to treat her with the utmost courtesy. People would complain that Shiva was not so soft and courteous in His dealings with Párvatii and Kálii as He was with Gauṇḡá. He was pampering Gauṇḡá too much – as if Shiva was dancing in joy, with Gauṇḡá seated on His head.

On the basis of this saying, Shiva was depicted in the Puranic Age with Gauṇḡá tied to His matted locks of hair. Then a story was concocted in some Purana that the water discarded after washing the feet of Viśṇu, flowed down from heaven, and Shiva supported the flow on His head; then this flow became the River Gauṇḡá [Ganges]. That is, Gauṇḡá the wife of Shiva became the River Gauṇḡá. Actually this River Gauṇḡá has no relation whatsoever to Shiva. The story continues that from Shiva's head the river flowed in four directions –

*Svargete Alakánandā marttye Bhágiirathii,
Pitrloke Mandákinii pátāle Bhogavatii.*

One of the flows went towards heaven and became known as Alakánandá; one went to the earth and became known as Bhágiirathii; the third one went to Pitrloka [Realm of the Ancestors] and became known as Mandákinii; and the last one, flowing to the underworld, became known as Bhogavatii.

These are mere tales of the Puranas. The River Gauṅgá has no relation to Gauṅgá who was the wife of Shiva. "Gauṅgá", the river, is derived from gam plus gam plus dá plus tá (to show feminine gender). Ga means a vast tract of land; gá means a woman who is moving; so a woman who is coming from a distant land and going towards another distant land – a woman who is flowing from Gaungottarii, the starting-point of the River Ganges, to Gauṅgáságar, the mouth of the river – through a 1500-mile stretch of land – is called "Gauṅgá". This River Gauṅgá [the Ganges] has no relation to the wife of Shiva.

9 May 1982, Calcutta

Footnotes

- (1) A kind of extreme hedonism. –Trans.
- (2) That is, she was accorded some religious status, but her name does not figure in either the Vedas or the Tantras. Laokik implies something created relatively recently out of popular sentiment. –Trans.
- (3) One of the mythological serpent-kings. –Trans.
- (4) A particular grammatical style of splitting words. –Trans.
- (5) A particular grammatical style of splitting words. –Trans.
- (6) Asuras – "monsters"; dánavas – "demons"; dásas – "slaves". "Shúdra" means a social group invented by the Aryans for this purpose of discrimination; therewith they created a fourth level at the bottom of their previously three-level system. –Trans.
- (7) The mythological treasurer of heaven. –Trans.
- (8) A sign of embarrassment. –Trans.
- (9) She wavered between saying her own name, "Kálii", and the name of her daughter, "Bhaeravii". The word became "Kaoverii". –Trans.

Shiva Throughout the Ages (Discourse 5)

I have already said that when ideology is totally reflected in a personality, that very personality is worshipped as a divine personality, a god. Ordinary people follow His instructions; they want to be guided by His will, because they experience bliss by moving in this way. Krśńa said,

*Yad yadācarati shreśthastad tadevetaráh janáh;
Sa yad pramáñám kurute lokastadanuvarttate.*

[The common masses faithfully follow whatever great people do; they follow the examples set by great personalities.]

In the age of Shiva, towards the end of Shiva's lifetime, the Aryan and the non-Aryan communities admitted the supremacy of Shiva. There were no longer conflicts between the Aryans and the non-Aryans regarding the issue of deities; there was no difference of opinion as to which great personality should be respected. Shiva was accepted as the supreme personality in the Vedas, and as such was considered a god. In the Vedic Age, people who worshipped the Vedic gods and goddesses accepted Shiva as one of them, and started worshipping Him and generally following His instructions. They used to follow only the ritualistic portions of the Vedas (the yajñas) and followed Shiva in all other matters. But those who did not follow even these ritualistic portions of the Vedas but followed Shiva in all matters were called Shaeva Tántriks [followers of Shiva Tantra].

Perhaps you know that in the Vedas, the Tantras, and partly in Post-Shiva Tantra, particular gods were worshipped with specific bijja mantras [acoustic roots]. Shiva was not worshipped with any particular acoustic root during His own time, in Shaeva Tantra [Shiva Tantra], because the people considered Shiva so much their own, so intimate with them, that they did not feel the necessity to worship Him with the help of any acoustic root. And Shiva really did become one of them. Thus they did not depend on any acoustic root to invoke Him. The then followers of the Vedas accepted the supremacy of Shiva, but their relation with Him was not so intimate. As I have already said, there was no system of idol worship in those days, but they used to accept Shiva as their deity of transmutation – as the transmutational principle.⁽¹⁾ The people in those days used m [the sound "mm"] as the acoustic root for the process of transmutation, the process of metamorphosis. Thus they used m to indicate anything concerned with Shiva.

Although Shiva was accepted in the Vedic Age, He himself did not follow the Vedic cult. He accepted only the Tantric cult and adhered to it very strictly, and persuaded others to do the same. You know that the Jain religion was introduced a little more than two thousand years ago, but the Shiva Cult is much older than the Jain religion. Some people claim that the Tirthaṅkars (the original Jain prophets) existed even before the advent of Vardhaman Mahavir; they propagated Jainism, but it was undoubtedly long after Shiva. When Jainism was spreading in India, Shiva had already become a god of the people; He had penetrated into all walks of Indian life and become intimately associated with each and every aspect of social life. This was not only because of His extraordinary personality and genius, but because of His pervasive influence in all spheres of human life. Though Jainism is quite old, and efforts were made to propagate it, the people of that age accepted it only superficially. Jainism received quite a good response in India, particularly in the Rárh area, but Shaeva Dharma maintained its existence like a subterranean flow in the people's minds.

Perhaps many of you know that Jainism is divided into several branches, and the two main branches are Digambara and Shvetámbara. By historical research, it has been found that Jainism is mainly Digambara.⁽²⁾ But later a time came when the Nirgranthaváda of Digambara Jainism (granthi means "knot", so nirgranthi means "not using the knots of clothes" – that is why the doctrine was known as "Digambara") was not appreciated by the householders, and it was primarily they who introduced the Shvetámbara doctrine,⁽³⁾ although Jainism is primarily Digambara. Later this Nirgranthaváda of Jainism was associated with Shaivism. People were outwardly Digambara Jain, but in the core of their hearts they were Shaivites. All the idols of Digambara Tirthaṅkars which have been found are naked. Now let us move to another topic.

In the prehistoric age, before even the Vedic Age started, people used to follow the system of phallic worship. I have mentioned in my book on Rárh that in those days there were severe conflicts among the different clans. They were never secure, neither at night nor during the day; so they always wanted to increase their numbers. Thus they worshipped the phallus as the symbol of their earnest desire to multiply. This phallic worship was more or less in vogue in almost all the countries of the world, not just in one particular country. Phallic worship was common in India, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia, and also widely prevalent in Central America – that is, in the southern part of North America and northern part of South America. Some think that this phallic worship was brought to America from India during the Shriishaelendra Empire of Andhra under the Pahlava, Pandya, and Chol Dynasties of South India. The phallus worshippers of Central America belonged to the Mayan civilization; thus America is called Máyádvīpa [Mayan Island] in Sanskrit. However, the fact is that those people followed this phallic worship from prehistoric times more as a social custom than as a spiritual or philosophic cult.

In the Jain age, the naked idols of the Tirthaṅkars aroused a new thought in the minds of the people, and thus for the first time phallic worship was introduced as part of the spiritual cult of Digambara Jainism. Shaeva Dharma existed side by side with Digambara Jainism; alongside the Jain and Buddhist doctrines, there existed Shaeva Tantra⁽⁴⁾ also in a metamorphosed form, which may be designated as Post-Shiva Tantra. In this way the worship of Shiva-liṅga [linga or phallus] was introduced in Post-Shiva Tantra through the influence of Jainism. Thus the prehistoric phallic worship, being associated with a newer spiritual awareness and philosophical outlook, produced a new trend of thought. (It should be remembered that metaphysics had already emerged by that time, for Jainism and Buddhism were propounded after the great sage Maharshi Kapila.) Thus the worship of Shiva-liṅga was introduced about 2500 years ago. But the phallic worship of the pre-historic age, and the worship of Shiva-liṅga in medieval India (around 2250 years ago), were not the same. The latter, invested with a novel philosophical and spiritual significance, awakened a new trend of human thought. The people of that time started worshipping Shiva-liṅga with a new outlook, just as they gave new significance to the Tirthaṅkaras. The intention behind the prehistoric phallic worship, as I have already said, was the worshippers' earnest desire to increase their numbers – because they had to fight day and night to survive. But in later times, when Shiva-liṅga worship was introduced in Jain Tantra, Buddhist Tantra, and Post-Shiva Tantra, it received a new interpretation, Liṅgate gamyate yasmin talliṅgam ["The entity [[from which all things originate and]] towards which all things are moving is liṅgam"]. All the psychic flows and existential vibrations are flowing in the mahákásha, the mahávyoma [the eternal void], and these vibrational expressions will finally terminate in that Supreme Principle of Transmutation, that Supreme Metamorphosis. So this Shiva-liṅga is the final destination of all expressions, the culminating point of all existence. Thus the mode of worship of Shiva-liṅga was altogether transformed.

Now this worship of Shiva-liṅga which began in the age of Jainism spread throughout every fibre of Indian life. In this new style of Shiva worship, both the dhyána mantra⁽⁵⁾ and bijja mantra of Shiva were changed. Now it is necessary to explain this bijja mantra.

All the phenomena, all the vibrational expressions in this universe have colour and sound. The human eye may be unable to perceive those subtle colours, and the human ear unable to catch those subtle sounds, but their existence cannot be denied just because of human inability to perceive them. Many animals and birds can perceive subtle vibrations and understand things which humans cannot – for instance, the olfactory capacity of tigers and dogs is far greater than that of human beings. Often dogs can identify miscreants by their smell. Each and every expression has its own sound, and the collection of all sounds is oṃkāra – a-u-m. A [the sound “uh”] is the acoustic root of creation, u [the sound “oo”] is the acoustic root of operation, and m is the acoustic root of destruction. The sound created by a particular vibration is called its “acoustic root” in Latin. The concept of so-called gods and goddesses is based on these acoustic vibrations, the sound expressions which emanate from the Supreme Consciousness and flow in various directions. This is the science behind the acoustic roots.

The acoustic root of Shiva as mentioned in the Vedas was m. I have already said that no acoustic root was necessary for the worship of Shiva [during His own time] because He was so intimate with all people. But in the age of Jain Tantra, Buddhist Tantra, and Post-Shiva Tantra, the acoustic root became aeṃ. This ae vowel is also an acoustic root.

If we analyse this aum sound,⁽⁶⁾ we find fifty root sounds, and these root sounds are all within the vast spectrum of eternal time, the supreme tempor. Within this spectrum there are infinite undulations of the waves of time. Time is nothing but the mental measurement of the motivity of action. Whenever there is action, there is motivity. Time is not an unbroken flow, but consists of disjointed elements. These elements are so closely connected that they seem to become one integral whole although actually it is not continuous. However, these fifty separate emanations are all sustained by this so-called temporal factor. These are: a, á, i, ii, u, úkṣa.⁽⁷⁾ So the alphabet is called akṣa or akṣamálá [málá means “garland”] – it is conceived as a garland of fifty letters.

During the time of the Atharvaveda it was thought that these fifty letters are being sustained by the time factor. I have already said that this conception of the Atharvaveda was wrong because the time factor is not an integral whole but a series of many separate entities. So these fifty letters of the oṃ-sound are combined in the time factor. In the age of the Atharvaveda, people learned to read and write, although there was no system for writing the Vedas in black and white. Thus it was conceived that the time factor had put on the fifty letters in a garland, and each letter was symbolized by a human face. The letter a was kept in the hand because a is the acoustic root of creation, and the rest of the letters (á to kṣa) were put in the garland of Bhadrakālī – a goddess of the Atharvaveda. It has been said:

*Yata shona karīaputē sabi māyer mantra batē
Kālī paiṇcāśat varīamayī varīe varīe virāj kare.*

[Whatever you hear is the incantative rhythm of the Divine Mother – the goddess Kālī – and consists of these fifty letters.]

You understand that this Bhadrakālī [a concept of the Atharvaveda which features the fifty letters] is not an integral whole either, but an aggregate of partial entities; so this is also a wrong concept from the philosophical point of view.⁽⁸⁾

Now, the letter ae (one of the twelve vowels) is called the vāgbhava bīja [acoustic root of speech]. A sprout emerges from every seed, and the seed from which the sprout of wisdom emerges is called the seed of the spiritual guide, the guru; so aeṃ came to be the acoustic root of the guru. Shiva was generally accepted as the guru. So in the age of Jain, Buddhist and Post-Shiva Tantra, aeṃ became accepted as the acoustic root of Shiva. The incantative rhythm of Shiva’s worship became Aeṃ Shivāya namah. But in the Vedic Age it was m.

Now let us consider the Jain Shiva. Nowadays large-size Shiva-liuṅgas are being excavated in different parts of India, especially in the Rārīh area. These are images either of the Jain Shiva or of the Shiva of the Post-Shiva Tantra of the Jain Age. In that age, there was intensive cultivation of knowledge throughout India. People considered this aeṃ (the root of wisdom and speech) to be an ideal acoustic root for knowledge. A long time later, when the worship of Sarasvatī, the goddess of learning, was introduced, she was given the same acoustic root (aeṃ – the acoustic root of speech). Aeṃ Sarasvatīyae namah [“Salutations to the goddess Sarasvatī”].

Thus far I have been talking about the Jain Shiva. The Jain Shiva has not been accepted in Shaeva Dharma but is accepted in Jain society because it was impossible to establish any doctrine without the influence of Shiva. In later times, Jain society was divided into different sections and sub-sections, and it influenced the contemporary Post-Shiva Tantra also. And then divisions arose regarding the worship of Shiva, and also differences of opinion about the system of Shiva-liuṅga worship which had been practised

since the Jain period. Some special types of Shiva-liuṅga were called jyotirliuṅga, other types were called ádiliuṅga, others were called anádiliuṅga – thus there were many different branches of Jainism, each with its own Shiva-liuṅga and its own style of worship. Another distinct type of Shiva-liuṅga is the Váñaliuṅga, but it was of a much later period, the Puranic Age. King Vána, the monarch of North Bengal (then called Varendrabhúmi), invented the Váñaliuṅga Shiva. In this way, the worship of Shiva underwent many changes in the Jain Age.

Now, the followers of Jainism are all vegetarians. The followers of Shiva are also vegetarians. But the Shiva Cult was more practical and thus it became the valuable asset of human beings, while Jainism became estranged from the people because of its impractical nature. For example, according to Jainism, tilling the land is not permitted because it would kill many worms and insects, thereby violating the principle of non-violence. But Shaeva Dharma is quite practical. Lord Shiva said Varttamánesu vartteta ["Live in the present"]. In other words, "Never ignore the practical realities of life." So even in the age of Jainism, the followers of the Shiva Cult used to cultivate the land, because to refrain from agriculture was not common sense. Again, the followers of Jainism covered their faces with a piece of cloth so that insects might not enter their noses and die. The followers of the Shiva Cult did not do such things, and they even fought if necessary, for they strictly followed the instructions of Shiva. There was much similarity between these two cultures, but in comparison with the culture of Shiva, the Jain culture had some serious drawbacks.

Now let us consider the Buddhist Shiva. Just as Shiva was worshipped in the age of Jain culture and Jainism influenced Post-Shiva Tantra and was also influenced by it, the same thing occurred in the Buddhist Age.

The Buddhist Age and the Jain Age occurred simultaneously. Lord Mahavir was about fifty years older than Lord Buddha. There was a pervasive influence of Maháyána Buddhism in some parts of India, China and Tibet. At that time, the Maháyána branch of Buddhism split into two sections, both of which embraced Tantric culture. The Shiva of Post-Shiva Tantra was accepted in Buddhist Tantra, and the followers of the latter also preferred to worship the Shiva-liuṅga instead of worshipping idols of Shiva.

You should remember that there is no mention of the worship of Shiva-liuṅga in the dhyána mantra of Shiva. From this it is clear that the worship of Shiva-liuṅga was introduced much later.

Because of the vast popularity of Shiva, He could not be neglected even in the Buddhist Age, and the worship of the Shiva idol or Shiva-liuṅga was accepted, only with a little difference. Shiva was not accepted as a perfect god. He was accepted as a bodhisattva, and a small image of Buddha was affixed to the image of Shiva. In some cases, a small image of Buddha was attached to the head of the image of Shiva at the time of Shiva's worship. The intention was to make it clear that Shiva was not a perfect god. He was a bodhisattva, and it was Buddha who was the goal of worship for Shiva. This kind of Bodhisattva Shiva became Baṭuka Bhaerava, then Boṛo Shiva, then Buṛo Shiva [Old Shiva], at a later time.

In the remote villages of Bengal, many temples of Buṛo Shiva are found. These images of Buṛo Shiva are from the Buddhist Age. The worship of this Buddhist Shiva was widely popular on the eastern side of the Himalayas, in Tibet, and in some parts of Bengal; it was introduced in Bengal during the days of Vajrayána Buddhism. It would not be irrelevant to say that though Vajrayána was prevalent in India, Tibet and a considerable part of China, the centre or the controlling point of it was a village named Vajra-Yoginii of Vikrampur of Dhaka district. A Chinese ácárya [spiritual teacher] of Buddhist Tantra lived there, named Pháhá-u-cá. This village and Vikrampur are still existing. The history of Vikrampur goes back much earlier than the Puranic Age. If I ever narrate the history of Baṛga-Dabák [southern Bangladesh], many things are to be said about this Vikrampur. In the age of Buddhist Tantra, the name of Vikrampur was Vikram Maṇipur – not Vikrampur. Oṅm maṇipadme hum was the mantra of Vajrayánii Buddhism. The name Vikram Maṇipur was derived from this Maṇipadma Mantra.

Anyway, Shiva was worshipped as a bodhisattva in the Buddhist Age. At that time a small idol of Buddha was set on the head of the image of Shiva or on the Shiva-liuṅga. The acoustic root of this Buddhist Shiva, the Jain Shiva and the Shiva of Post-Shiva Tantra was aerṁ. This aerṁ is the acoustic root of speech and hearing, the root from which all knowledge springs.

Then came the Shiva Cult and Shákta Cult of the Puranic Age. In this age also, the worship of Shiva continued. The Puranic concept of Shiva was the consolidation of the worship of the twenty-two varieties of Shiva-liuṅga, including the jyotirliuṅga, the anádiliuṅga, the ádiliuṅga, etc., plus the Shiva-liuṅga of King Vána. But the interesting thing is that the Shiva of this Puranic Age was quite different from the Shiva of Jain, Buddhist, or Post-Shiva Tantra. Consequently the acoustic root of Shiva also changed from aerṁ to haorṁ. The acoustic root of the Puranic Shiva became Haorṁ Shiváya namah.

The concept of a deity must change if there is a change in its acoustic root. So Sadāshiva, the very shelter of human life for seven thousand years, and this Shiva of the Jain, Buddhist or Post-Shiva Tantra, are not the same person.

There is another interesting thing which people generally ignore. You will notice that when Buddhism was gradually transformed into Puranic Shaivism, that transitional period was the age of the Nátha Cult. The word nátha [lord] used to be appended to the names of the prophets of the Nátha Cult, for instance Ádinátha, Miinanátha, Matsyendranátha (who invented Matsyendrāsana), Gorakśanátha, Gohiniinátha, and Caoraungiinátha (after whom Chowringee Street in Calcutta has been named). These were the spiritual teachers of the Nátha Cult.

This Nátha Cult was the result of the synthesis between Buddhist Tantra and the Puranic Shiva Cult. All the masters of the Nátha Cult were considered as avatáras of Shiva; that is, after the death of these masters, people made idols of them and worshipped them in the temples as incarnations of Shiva. Thus just as the word nátha was appended to the names of the masters, it was also appended to the names of Shiva when He was worshipped – for instance, Tárakanátha, Vaedyanátha, Vishvanátha, etc.

These deities were the objects of worship for the followers of the Nátha Cult; they had nothing to do with the Sadāshiva of seven thousand years ago. There was a vast time gap of about 5500 years between the two. Although in the Shiva Cult and the Shákta Cult of the Puranic Age people continued the worship of Shiva-liuṅga, they used to append the word iishvara [controller or lord] to the names of Shiva just to differentiate their Shiva from the Shiva of the Nátha Cult. For instance, Tárakeshvara, Vishveshvara and Rámeshvara. Sometimes they used to name Shiva with the addition of both nátha, in the manner of the Nátha Cult followers, and iishvara, in the manner of the Puranic Shiva Cult. For instance, they would say either, or both, Tárakanátha or Tarákeshvara, Vishvanátha or Vishveshvara. (But the Vaedyanátha of Deoghar cannot be called Vaedyeshvara.)

From this one can easily distinguish which Shiva was worshipped by which cult – which was worshipped by the Nátha Cult followers, and which by the Puranic Shiva Cult followers.

*Saorástre Somanáthaiṇca,
Shriishaela Mallikárjunám;
Ujjayinyám Mahákálám,
Omákáramamaleshvaram.*

[Shiva of Saurashtra is called Somanátha; in Shriishaela He is Mallikárjunam; in Ujjayinii He is Mahákálám, and in Omákárnáth He is Amaleshvaram.]

Again it is said:

*Varáśasyám Vishvanáthah,
Setubandhe Rámeshvarah;
Jhárakhańde Vaedyanáthah,
Ráre ca Tárakeshvarah.*

[He is known as Vishvanátha in Varanasi, as Rámeshvara in Setubandha, as Vaedyanátha in Jharakhańda, and as Tárakeshvara in Rárh.]

This is how Shiva is variously worshipped by the followers of different cults. In some places He is addressed as nátha by the followers of the Nátha Cult, in other places as iishvara by the followers of the Puranic Shiva Cult. The acoustic root for Shiva in all these cases is haom, and as there has been a change in the acoustic root, this Shiva is not the Shiva of seven thousand years ago.

Then comes the laokik Shiva. If a great personality is endowed with tremendous power, that influence penetrates deep into the society. His influence cannot be limited only to the upper stratum of society; He cannot be restricted to the status of a leader of the elite alone. He associates with all the so-called classes like Anácaráñiyya Shúdras, Ácaráñiyya Shúdras and Antyaja Shúdras, because He belongs to all: He does not belong to any particular person or group. Shiva was such a personality. He associated Himself with the common people, even illiterate Shúdras, uneducated women, in fact everyone. These people were deprived of the right to study the Vedas. The Antyaja Shúdras, if they even heard the Vedic chants, or the controlling Vedic mantra aum, or the "Savitr Rk" mantra, would be committing a great sin and molten lead would be poured into their ears so that their hearing would be destroyed forever. Nor were women, however educated, allowed to hear such sacred chants; and it was taught that however spiritually advanced a woman might be, she would have to be reborn as a man to attain liberation.

This sort of propaganda was spread for a long time by opportunistic people. Shiva smashed all these dogmas with a blow of His trident. Thus I say, this Shiva can assert –

*Mor nám ei bale khyáta hok
Ámi tomáderi lok,
Er cheye beshii kichu nay,
Ei hok sheś paricaya.*

[Let the people know about Me
That I belong to them –
Nothing more than this.
This is My final credential.]

That laokik Shiva pervaded every aspect of social life. Even today, small girls make clay images of Shiva-liuṅga, and with a little ghee poured into their earthen lamps with cotton wicks, perform evening áratí [worship] to Shiva. This Shiva is neither a Vedic deity, nor Tantric, nor Jain, nor Buddhist, nor Post-Shiva Tantric, nor of the Puranic Shiva Cult, nor of the Nátha cult. He is the laokik Shiva – the simple god of the simple people. For this Shiva there is no necessity of bijā mantra, or of dhyāna mantra, or of prañāma mantra, or of any priest, or of any ritualistic paraphernalia. The people have been worshipping this Shiva for ages in their simplest language and saying, Namah Shiváya namah, at the time of offering their obeisances, satisfied with the idea that this will please their god. Maybe this Shiva is not Parama Puruśa or Parama Brahma, but He is the sweet and most intimate god of the common people.

*Shil shilátan shile bátan
Shil áchen ghare
Svarga theke Mahádeva balen
Gaorii kii batta kare?
Ás Náráyań bás Náráyań
Tolá Gauṅgár jal
Ei peye tuśta han
Bholá Maheshvara.*

[Shiva is in the house;
From heaven Mahádeva asks,
“What vow is Gaorii observing?”
Come on Náráyań, and take your seat here;
Shiva is satisfied with merely a little Ganges water;
This is the only ritual of Shiva worship.](⁹)

He is a perfect laokik Shiva – He is neither a recognized deity of the scriptures nor worshipped by the priests. This laokik Shiva has nothing to do with our ancient Shiva, seven thousand years old. Then how did this laokik Shiva come into being? He originated because of the people’s enormous love and affection for that seven-thousand-year-old Shiva. Behind this vast popularity of Shiva is His sádhutá [honesty], His saralatá [simplicity], His tejasviitá [spiritedness], and His love of ideology, which stirred the human heart to its innermost depths. People could not live without loving Him.

*Chili ámár putul kheláy prabháte Shivapújár beláy
Tore ámi bheńgechi ár gańechi
Tui ámár thákurer sane chili pújár simhásane
Tánri pújáy tomár pújá karechi
Sab devatár árádhya dhan nitya káler tui purátan
Tui prabháter álor samavayasii
Tui asiimer utsa hate esechis ánandasrote
Nútan haye ámár buke bilasi.*

–Rabindranath Tagore

[You were there in the play of my childhood dolls,
You were there in my morning worship of Shiva.
I have broken and rebuilt your image again and again.
You are seated on the altar with my deity;
When I do His worship, I worship You as well.

You are the supreme goal of all gods,
Eternal, the oldest of the old.
You are as old as the morning radiance.
Emerging from the origin of infinity
In an eternal flow of bliss,
In expressions ever-new,
You are shining in my heart.]

Even now, if a person's conduct is exceedingly noble, people exclaim in joy, "Ah, how nice that person is! He is just like Sadáshiva!" That is, even after seven thousand years people have not been able to forget Him. No one has forgotten Him, neither the educated nor uneducated, neither the upper castes nor the so-called untouchables.

Even now people narrate many stories regarding the simplicity of Shiva. He was the living embodiment of the highest expression of simple-heartedness. There is a fine story to illustrate this point. One afternoon Shiva returned home from the cremation ground and said to Párvatii, "Please give me some rice." Párvatii replied, "Well, you are asking for rice, but do you know the condition of the kitchen? There is no stock of rice today. So how can I give you rice?" Simple Shiva said,

*Shák náí shuktá náí, vyainjano yadi náí
Cáulo báránta tabe phýān bhát cáí.*

[Well, if there are no vegetables or other dishes,
And if there is no rice, then give me only rice gruel.]

Párvatii said, "When there is no rice, how will I give you rice gruel?" Then Shiva said, "Well, what about those grains which I collected as alms last year? Are they all finished?"

Párvatii answered, "You are talking about your collection of one year ago – we had a little quantity in stock, but the mouse of your Gañesha has eaten them all up!"

*Bhándárete rákhá chilo páli chay dhán
Gañesher musháte karila jalpán.*

[We had some six measures of rice in our storeroom,
But the mouse of Gañesha ate them for breakfast.]

Shiva said, "Mice also eat rice? Is that so? Then let me fast today."

Párvatii said, "No need to observe fast. I have already collected some fruits and roots from the forest – you can eat them."

There are various stories to illustrate this simplicity of Shiva. He taught the people, "You must be brave, you must ardently follow dharma, but you must never give up your simplicity. You must move on a straight path."

Shiva was the embodiment of firmness; thus the people of those days found the fullest expression of divine qualities in Him. In His simple personality they found the accumulation of many treasures. Thus all people, irrespective of their caste, community, or education, surrendered before Him and said,

Nivedayámi cátmánám tvaṁ gatih Parameshvara.

[I totally surrender myself to You, You are my ultimate refuge,
You are the culminating point of the journey of my life.]

12 May 1982, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) That is, that Shiva was the one fundamental substance of the universe which was transmuted into the various forms of creation. –Trans.

(2) That is, the followers of Jainism did not use clothes. (Dik means "direction" and ambara means "clothes", so digambara means that people will remain uncovered, just as the natural directions do.) –Trans.

(3) Shveta means "white" and ambara means "clothes"; so the Shvetámbara Jains used to wear white clothes instead of remaining naked. –Trans.

- (4) "Shaeva Dharma" refers to all Shiva's teachings, both practical and Cosmological, whereas "Shaeva Tantra" refers primarily to the practical spiritual cult. –Trans.
- (5) See Discourse 20. –Trans.
- (6) Also spelled oṃ. –Trans.
- (7) That is, the fifty sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet, beginning with the first vowel a and ending with the last consonant kṣa. –Trans.
- (8) The partial entities are not conceived as becoming unified in one Infinite Entity. –Trans.
- (9) Shiva (Maheshvara), Mahádeva and Náráyaṇa all represent the same divine Entity; Gaorii and the speakers of the poem represent all devotees. –Trans.

All Bask in the Glory of Shiva – 1 (Discourse 6)

From the study of history, it is known that the Rgveda was composed outside India, mainly in Central Asia and Russia. The Yajurveda was written mostly outside India; only a portion was written in India. And the Atharvaveda was composed in Afghanistan and India. Those three Vedas – Rk, Yaju and Atharva – long afterwards, say about 3500 years ago – were edited and divided into different branches by Maharshi Krishadvaipayana Vyasa. The oldest compositions were named Rgveda, the intermediate portions were called Yajurveda, and the remaining portions were named Atharvaveda. The last-named Veda was named after the great sage, Atharva, the first author of this Veda. And by compiling the musical compositions of the three Vedas, yet another Veda – the Sámaveda, the fourth Veda – was created. Sámá in Sanskrit means "musical composition". The Sámaveda itself is not a Veda.

Sadáshiva was born at a time when the age of the Rgveda was coming to an end and the Yajurvedic Age was about to begin. The people had not yet invented script. In the days of Shiva, the serious disadvantage was that, although the people were acquainted with the science of phonetics, that is, the intonations of the letters, they did not know how to write the letters. The Bráhmii and Kharoṣṭhi scripts were invented some time after Shiva. Thus we can generally say that the Vedas and Tantras exercised their mutual influence over each other, through the invention of script, only at the time of the Atharvaveda.

The external form that was given to Tantra by Shiva in His time underwent a slight transformation in subsequent periods. You may raise the question – well, when the goal is the same, when the path is also the same, then why this transformation? The only cause was: there was no written book in those days. All the compositions – both Vedas and Tantras – were handed down orally from one generation to another. As a result, there arose a difference of opinion among the teachers themselves – one teacher or muni [seer] would say one thing, and another muni would say something else.

Now although letters were invented during the age of the Atharvaveda, the Vedas could not be written down due to one obstacle – a peculiar superstition (better to call it a dogma) that the Vedas should not be written down. Maharshi Atharva's followers – Aungirá, Aungirasa, Satyaváha, Vaedarbhi, etc. – tried for the first time to get the Vedas written down in letters, but they were not courageous enough to do so because it was forbidden. (The very name of Vaedarbhi suggests that he was a resident of Vidarbha, and in India, particularly in the Vidarbha area, the Atharvaveda was partly written. Hence it is not proper to assume that the entire Veda was written outside India.) The Vedas were called shruti because they had to be mastered only by hearing: letters had not yet been invented. But once the script was invented, what could be the reason for not writing down the Vedas? The problem was the superstition, and the scholars did not dare to defy the superstition.

Now the Post-Shiva Tantra that gradually crystallized through the transformation of the original Shiva Tantra had two branches – the Gaodíiya School and the Káshmiirii School. In East India, that is, Bengal, where the Gaodíiya School of Tantra was popular, the Vedas had little influence. But in Kashmir, where the Káshmiira branch of Tantra was more dominant, there was the influence of both Tantra and the Vedas. During those days of ascendancy of the Káshmiira branch of Post-Shiva Tantra, the Káshmiira scholars first wrote the Vedas in contemporary Sáradá script; that is, the Vedas were written first in Sáradá script. Later came the age of Buddhism and Jainism; of course Post-Shiva Tantra was running parallel to them. Script had already been invented. The books on Jainism were mostly written in Prákṛta, in the Bráhmii script which was a bit transformed; while the books on Buddhism were written in Mágadhii Prákṛta, that is, in Pali, in the Bráhmii script of that time. But the Post-Shiva Tantra was written in Sanskrit; of course in Bráhmii script. So this all proves that the invention of scripts removed a great

obstacle on the way. At this time there was a mutual exchange of ideas among Jain Tantra, Buddhist Tantra and Post-Shiva Tantra.

When some ideas or schools of thought exist side by side for a long period in a certain country, there is bound to be some sort of mutual exchange, and the result of this type of exchange cannot but be beneficial. It is often found that the result is either good or, at the worst, neither good nor bad. For instance, the Puranic concept of the deity Náráyaṇa and the Islamic concept of Pīrabhakti combined together to give rise to a new concept of Satyapiira in Bengal. Its effect was not bad.

Similarly, those three schools of Tantra – the Jain, the Buddhist, and the Shivottara [Post-Shiva] – began to come to an understanding. All three schools broadly accepted the division of Tantra into sixty-four main branches, considering its various expressions. The only difference that persisted was the external one of differences in terminology: each school retained certain specific terms of its own. But they all generally accepted that human life had sixty-four types of expression, and hence there were sixty-four branches of Tantra. In their internal essence, they were not very far from one another; only certain terms – something external – were used differently by different Tantras. For instance, the Múlá Prajiñá Shakti [Fundamental Cognitive Principle] was called Jinaratna or Jinaraana in Jain Tantra –

*Bhañai Káhnú jina raan bi kaesá
Káleṇ bob samvohia jaesá.*

– whereas in Shiva Tantra, rather in Post-Shiva Tantra, the word Shiva was used, and Buddhist Tantra used the various epithets of Buddha. Thus the sixty-four Tantras were running parallel.

For each of these sixty-four Tantras, one particular yoginii-tattva was accepted as the presiding deity (a particular controlling deity of a particular branch of Tantra was called a yoginii). All three Tantras accepted this arrangement. And all three, in order to maintain their popularity, used the name of Shiva – they declared that each Tantric deity was the wife of Shiva. Those of you who have gone to Jabbalpur might have noticed the sixty-four small temples on a hill there dedicated to these sixty-four yoginiis. They are all sixty-four Jain Tantric deities. Similarly, in Buddhist Tantra, particularly in Vajrayánii Buddhist Tantra, sixty-four deities were accepted. Shivottara Tantra followed the same practice.

Interestingly, you will notice how at this stage a silent synthesis was taking place among the different schools. Some of the Jain deities were recognized by Buddhist Tantra (for instance, the Jain deity Bāráhii, with a swine's face, was transformed into Vajrabāráhii in Vajrayánii Buddhist Tantra). Shivottara Tantra gave similar recognition to deities of other Tantras. Conversely, some of the deities of Shivottara Tantra were recognized and accepted by Jain and Buddhist Tantra.

All this proves that the synthesis of these three systems of Tantra charted a new path. This was all made possible by the invention of script. As long as script was unknown or unused, they maintained their distinct separateness; but with the popular use of script, they began to come closer to each other. For example, Ambiká is an accepted deity of Jain Tantra. But then she also became recognized by Shivottara Tantra – she was supposed to be a wife of Shiva. (But as you know, these deities cannot be the wives of Sadáshiva, who is seven thousand years old, whereas these deities are all of comparatively recent origin – about two thousand years old – arising after the invention of script.) This Ambiká Devii has been accepted in a different manner in Paoráñik Sháktácára [the Puranic Shakti Cult], as the goddess Lakśmii, but actually she is a Jain deity.

In Rárh, there is a town named Kalna where there is still a temple dedicated to the goddess Ambiká. Once there was a tremendous influence of Jainism in Rárh. The town was named Ambiká-Kalna, after the goddess, and is now called Enbo-Kalna. Another instance: the Buddhist goddess Tára was accepted in Shivottara Tantra, and still later, in the Puranic Shakti Cult. And her changed form was accepted in the Puranic Shakti Cult as the goddess Sarasvatii. The goddess Kálii of Shivottara Tantra was accepted in Buddhist Tantra.

Thus there came an age of synthesis. And following this synthesis, these deities were accepted as gods and goddesses in Paoráñik Shaevácára [the Puranic Shiva Cult] and the Puranic Shakti Cult in somewhat changed form. This form underwent slightly more transformation during the middle of the Pathan Age, whose influence still lingers in a minor form.

Now in the process of synthesis among Jain, Buddhist and Shivottara Tantra, there evolved a new concept, the concept of Dashamahávidyá [Ten Mahávidyás], centring around those deities who had general influence in all three systems of Tantra. The idea of Dashamahávidyá arose out of ten Tantric deities, some from Jain Tantra, some from Buddhist Tantra and some from Shivottara Tantra. These deities, in slightly changed form, were accepted in Paoráñik Sháktácára, Vaeśnavácára, Shaevácára and

Gáñapatyácára [the Puranic Shakti Cult, Viśnú Cult, Shiva Cult and Gañapati Cult]. While analysing the history of Dashamahávidyá, it is interesting to see how the concept of each deity evolved – how an idea dawned upon the human mind and gradually expanded in the path of synthesis until finally its basic defects demolished its own fundamentals.

These Ten Mahávidyás are Kálii, Tára, Śódashii, Bhuvaneshvarii, Bhaeravii, Chinnamastá, Dhúmávatii, Bagalámukhii, Mátaungii and Kamalá. These deities are present in all three Tantras. Sometimes their bijja mantras are the same, sometimes different. For your proper understanding, let me give you a brief idea about these ten deities.

*Meghavarṇā vigatavasanaḥ shavashivārúdhā Shyāmā trinayanaḥ;
Narashirakhadgavarābhayashobhanā caturbhujā Kālī kálīkārūpīnī.
Garvitadānavagarvakharvákrti khadgakharpārā Nīla Sarasvatī;
Sarvasaobhāgyapradāyīnī karttī namaste Tārārūpā tārinī.
Bālārūnasamā-ujjvalaṅgābhā caturbhujā trinayanaḥ;
Tribhuvanamanolobhā pāshāmkusha-sharacāpa dhārinī Shivā Śódashī rūpā Shivabhāvinī.
Hāsyamukharitā nishākaravanditā tribhuvanamaṅgala Bhuvaneshvarī mātā;
Raktotpāladharā kotibhānuninditā Bhaeravī varābhayā dāyīnī.
Vivarnā vidhavā malināmbāradharā kākadhvajā Dhúmāvatī shūrpakarā;
Bagalāmukhī pītavarṇā pītāmbarā mudgara arjīhvā dhārinī.
Nijashirachinditā rudhīrapānaratā digvāsā ratiratā jano parisamsthītā;
Chinnamastā mātā dakiniisamanvitā prabalapātākīkula ghātinī.
Manimayāsane shyāmakalevarā Mātaungīrūpadharā sudhāmshu shekharā;
Kāñcanakāntisudīptā sumanoharā Kamalā harahrdivāsīnī.*

The first of these deities is Káliká. She is one of the controlling deities of Shivottara Tantra, but simultaneously she was accepted in Buddhist Vajrayāna. I have said a number of times that Shiva was the most influential personality. Therefore an attempt was made to establish some kind of relationship with Him: it was announced that Káliká was Shiva's spouse. But one should remember that Shiva was born five thousand years before the age of Káliká; so how could Káliká be His wife? Secondly, Káliká – this controlling deity – is depicted as having four hands. No human structure can have four hands. So Káliká Shakti – Kálii – this deity – is not Shiva's wife. She is a Tantric deity belonging to subsequent ages.

The second deity is Tára. Tára is one of the Tantric deities of Vajrayāna Tantra. I have said previously that the Tára that was worshipped in India was known as Ugratára, while the deity that was worshipped in China was called Bhrámarii Tára – “black as a bumblebee” – and the one who was worshipped in Tibet (Kímpuruśavarśa, as it was known previously) was blue-coloured. So this Tára was later than Buddha, and later yet than Shiva; hence Tára cannot be accepted as the wife of Shiva either. There is not even any similarity in name. Shiva did have one wife whose name was Kálii, so she has at least the similarity in name with Kálii, the deity of Post-Shiva Tantra. But this was not the case with Tára. Tára is purely a deity of the Buddhist Vajrayāna Tantra. But she is accepted as a deity in Post-Shiva Tantra and the Puranic Shakti Cult.

Even today, you will come across boys with names such as Tárápada, Táráprasáda, etc., and girls with such names as Tárádevii. This is the history behind these names.

Tára has no relation to Shiva. People wrongly believe that she is the wife of Shiva. I shall say something more about Tára later, when I discuss Sarasvatii.

Then comes Śódashii, the third deity. In this connection, let us say something about bijja mantra. At the time of Shiva, there was no use of bijja mantra in Shiva Tantra. The people loved Shiva so intimately that they did not think it necessary to worship Him with a particular bijja mantra. In subsequent periods the use of bijja mantra became an accepted practice. In Buddhist Tantra, the acoustic root of Kálii was raṁ: this was also the acoustic root of energy. This bijja mantra signifies the application of energy in action. But in Post-Shiva Tantra the bijja mantra for the same purpose was changed into riṁ. (Ra, the acoustic root of energy, plus ii suffix, indicating feminine gender, equals riṁ.) This denotes that energy is a female entity. And in still later days, when this deity Kálii was accepted in the Puranic Shakti Cult (the present custom of the worship of the goddess Kálii is derived from the Puranic Shakti Cult), the bijja mantra (riṁ) was further changed into klrṁ: Klrṁ Káliikāyae namah.

Generally in the Post-Buddha days, during the period of the Puranic Shakti Cult, all the Buddhist, Jain and Post-Shiva Tantric deities were declared to be the wives of Shiva, otherwise the society would not recognize and worship them. But they have different bijja mantras. In the Puranic Age, the commonly-accepted practice was that the controlling deities derived from Post-Shiva Tantra were

designated as "Dakṣiṇā Shakti", and those derived from Vajrayāna Buddhism were designated as "Vāmā Shakti".

For instance, Kālīkā: she was known as "Vāmā Kālī" when worshipped in Buddhist Tantra. When an image was made of her, she would be painted jet-black; her left leg would be placed forward, her right leg behind; and there would be red patches on her left leg. This deity, Vāmā Kālī, was not worshipped inside houses or in villages; she was worshipped in the cremation grounds outside the villages. These days, these deities are called by various names: for instance, Vāmā Kālī, Shmashāna Kālī, Rakṣā Kālī and Raṭantī Kālī. These are all deities of the Buddhist Tantra Cult, subsequently declared to be "Vāmā Shakti"; and the goddesses of Post-Shiva Tantra who are now accepted in the Puranic Cult are called "Dakṣiṇā Shakti".

But the images of Dakṣiṇā Shakti are painted black or blue, or light green, and the right leg is placed in front. They are worshipped mainly at home, or inside the villages. The idea is: we may accept the deities of Buddhist Tantra, but not as family deities or village deities. Some sort of distance must be maintained. But in the case of the Dakṣiṇā Shaktis, there is no such distance.

Though both types of deity, dakṣiṇā and vāmā, were declared to be the wives of Shiva, historically speaking, they had no relationship with Shiva, because all these deities originated at least five thousand years later than Shiva. Not only that, no human structure can have four hands. They have been selected out of the sixty-four schools of Tantra. Basically, they are not human structures.

An old Bengali poem says,

*Ek so padumā caośāṭṭī pākhurī
Te madhye nācanti dōmnī bāpurī.*

This is very old Bengali. It means, "There is one lotus flower having sixty-four petals, and in the centre of the petals is dancing Naerātma Devī." In Buddhist Tantra, Prakṛti, who is active in all the manifestations and emanations of this universe, is called Naerātma Devī.

Let us come to Śoḍashī of these Ten Mahāvidyās. Śoḍashī is also called Shivā – that is, "the wife of Shiva, one whose object of meditation is Shiva". Śoḍashī, who was originally a deity of Buddhist Vajrayāna Tantra, was accepted subsequently in Post-Shiva Tantra with a new name, Rājarājeshvarī. Later, in the Puranic Shākta Cult, this deity Rājarājeshvarī was accepted and worshipped, though she was not very popular among the masses. More recently, towards the end of the Mughal period and the beginning of the British period, Krṣṇācandra, the king of Nadia, introduced the worship of Rājarājeshvarī, in a slightly changed form and with a new name – Jagaddhātṛī. Thus Jagaddhātṛī is essentially a Buddhist Tantric deity transformed from Śoḍashī. (You should note carefully that the worship of Jagaddhātṛī was especially popular in Krishnanagar. It is comparatively recent in origin, as it started in the early part of British history.) Just as Śoḍashī in Buddhist Tantra was conceived to be the wife of Shiva, Rājarājeshvarī and Jagaddhātṛī were also declared to be Shiva's wives. But how can they be the wives of Shiva, who lived seven thousand years ago?

It may be a bit irrelevant to mention here, but the fact is that the worship of Jagaddhātṛī is carried out in both Krishnanagar and Chandannagar with great pomp and pageantry. An inhabitant of Chandannagar – possibly his name was Gauṅgā Govinda Bandyopādhyāya – was the Dewan, the Prime Minister, of Nadia. Following the example of Krishnanagar he introduced the worship of Jagaddhātṛī in Chandannagar also. In art, grandeur, pomp and pageantry, Chandannagar lags behind Krishnanagar. But Chandannagar can claim supremacy in one special area: there the Jagaddhātṛī idols are of gigantic size.

Anyway, these deities, which originated in the days of medieval Jain Tantra, Buddhist Tantra and Post-Shiva Tantra, were not the wives of Shiva. Some had four hands, some had eight hands, etc., so they were not representations of human beings.

In this connection, one more question may arise. People say that Ramchandra, the king of Ayodhyā, was the first to worship the goddess Durgā: you may have also heard such a story.

Let us discuss this topic. But obviously, before that, we have to say something about the epic Rāmāyaṇa. The story of the Rāmāyaṇa was handed down orally from generation to generation in India, Malaysia and Indonesia, for many thousands of years, not only two thousand or four thousand years. But the story was first written down in the form of a book by Maharshi Valmiki, and that too long after the age of Shiva, even after the age of Buddha.

We have two proofs on hand to substantiate this point: First, that the antiquity of a certain book is proven by its language. If the language is old, the book is also old; if the language is modern, the book is

also modern. The language of the Rámáyāña by Valmiki is not at all old; rather it is very simple Sanskrit, the type of simple Sanskrit in which the scriptures of Maháyāna Buddhism were written down. The second proof is, the Rámáyāña by Valmiki contains some allegations against Buddha. In the book, Buddha has been castigated for his atheism; he has been branded as an atheist, as a thief and as a hypocrite. This proves conclusively that the Rámáyāña was composed after Buddha; otherwise how could Buddha be criticized in the book? All these castigations are to be found in the "Ayodhyá Kánda" of the Rámáyāña.

Let us say a little more about this. So far as the Mahábhárata is concerned, it did not come down orally from ancient days. The event of the Mahábhárata took place some 3500 years ago, in the days of Lord Krśná, and it was written down at the same time or a little later. In the Mahábhárata also, there are some references to the Rámáyāña. These are not references to the Rámáyāña of Valmiki, but to the oral story of the Rámáyāña prevalent in those days. In any case, in those days when the Rámáyāña was composed by Valmiki, the Márkańdeya Puráña was not in existence. The Márkańdeya Puráña contains references to the goddess Durgá. This Márkańdeya Puráña was composed in the Puranic Age, when the Shakti Cult was developing. The goddess Durgá of those days is described in one place as eight-handed, and in another place as ten-handed; but final recognition was given to the ten-handed goddess.

These are all imaginary creations of the authors of the Puranas [mythological stories]. At the time when the Rámáyāña was being composed by Valmiki, the Márkańdeya Puráña was not in existence, hence the story of the goddess Durgá was not known to the people. So the stories in the Rámáyāña that Rama was worshipping the goddess Durgá with one hundred and eight blue lotuses, and that the goddess stole one of them, were unknown to the people. Valmiki's Rámáyāña contains no reference to these stories.

Then came the Márkańdeya Puráña, on the basis of which the Shrii Shrii Cańdii was composed. You should know that during the days of the Puranic Shakti Cult, the primeval stage of the Operative Principle was known as Ádyá Shakti, and this Ádyá Shakti at Her fiercest was called Cańda Shakti or Cańdii. In the Márkańdeya Puráña also, whose abridged form was the Shrii Shrii Cańdii, which contained stories of the goddess Durgá, King Surath, etc., there are no references to Rama; there is no story that Ramchandra performed the worship of the goddess.

Now, many of you are aware of the fact that Ramchandra was not an historical figure, but a fictional one: he was an imaginary character to represent an ideal king. Maharśi Valmiki was the first person to give proper expression to that character. But the poet Tulsidas tried still harder, in the Mughal period, not very long ago, to accomplish this through the Rámacaritamánasa, written in the Avadhii language. The Rámacaritamánasa is not the complete Rámáyāña. Tulsidas described the character of Rama as he thought Rama should be; he delineated the character of Rama as he conceived of Rama in his own mind. Tulsidas was a truthful person. He did not name his book the Tulasiidásii Rámáyāña, he named it Rámacaritamánasa ["The Life of Rama As Conceived by Tulsidas"].

In this book also, there is no mention of the goddess Durgá being worshipped by Rama. Then where does it occur that Rama worshipped the goddess Durgá? In the early part of the Pathan period, there ruled a king at Taherpur in the district of Rajshahii in the Varendrabhúmi (the present north Bengal). His name was Kańsanáráyaña Ráy. That King Kańsanáráyaña had enormous wealth – a vast zamindary, or estate. He called the Brahman pandits of the zamindary and expressed his desire to perform either Rájasúya or Ashvamedha Yajiņa.⁽¹⁾ "Let the people know that I possess abundant wealth. I shall donate liberally to charity during the ceremony."

On hearing this, the pandits observed, "O noble sir, this is Kali Yuga, when you cannot perform Ashvamedha or Rájasúya Yajiņa. Instead, you can make liberal expenditures on the occasion of the worship of Durgá as depicted in the Márkańdeya; you can then organize great pomp and show. So please hold Durgá Pújá according to the description given in the Márkańdeya Puráña."

Then King Kańsanáráyaña first introduced the custom of the worship of Durgá by spending 700,000 gold coins (millions of rupees). So you understand that the practice of the worship of Durgá is not at all an old practice; it started only in the early part of the Pathan period of history.

Now following King Kańsanáráyaña's example, Rajá Jagadvallabha (some say "Jagatnáráyaña"), of Ektákiyá, perhaps in Rangpur District of Bangladesh, performed the worship of Durgá with still greater pomp and show by spending 850,000 gold coins; and following their examples, other landowners also thought, "Are we inferior to them? We can also be big spenders!" So they too started worshipping the goddess Durgá with pomp and grandeur. Thus the worship of Durgá became a general practice in every great landowner's house, and the number of people performing the worship increased. But the worship was always held within a family setting.

At that time some twelve friends in a village called Guptipara or Guptavrndávan at Balágarh Police Station in Hooghly District thought, "Maybe we are not able to perform the worship individually, but we can collectively organize the pújá [worship]." In the Urdu language, a friend is called iyár; thus the worship organized by twelve friends [in Bengali, "twelve" is báro] is báro + iyárii = bároyárii pújá. Previously it had been held in a family setting, but now it became collective. Since in Bároyárii Pújá [Collective Pújá], low-caste people are denied the privilege of offering aṅḡjali, Bároyárii Pújá was transformed, in very recent times, into Sárvejaniin Pújá [Everyone's Pújá], so that everyone could take part in it.

In any case, this Durgá Pújá was an event of the early period of the Pathan rule. Later the poet Kṛttivása Thákur composed the Bengali Rámáyána. At that time King Hussain Shah was the Nawab of Bengal. He was a great patron of learning, and he was very keen to have good books written in original Bengali or translated from the Sanskrit language. At his request, the poet Kṛttivása translated the Rámáyána from Sanskrit to Bengali. The worship of Durgá had already become a general practice in the houses of landlords in Bengal; so in order to lend greater credence to the worship of Durgá, he mentioned in his book the Bengali Rámáyána, this incident of Rama worshipping the goddess Durgá. It was not an historical fact, nor was it a very old event: it was merely an event of the Pathan period. Thus the Bengali Rámáyána, composed by Kṛttivása, was the source of the information that Rama worshipped the goddess Durgá.

Later on I will say a little more about the periods of Jain Tantra, Buddhist Tantra, Post-Shiva Tantra and the Puranas, which were prevalent about 1300 years ago, and on whose basis evolved the Puranic Shakti Cult, Shiva Cult, Viśnú Cult, Gaṇapati Cult and Súra Cult.

18 May 1982, Calcutta

Footnotes

(1) A royal sacrificial ceremony. –Trans.

All Bask in the Glory of Shiva – 2 (Discourse 7)

Considering Shiva's unprecedented wisdom, His unique qualities of leadership, His unbounded love for human beings – in a word, His unsurpassed uniqueness in all aspects of life – spiritual aspirants realized that although Shiva was human in form, He was in fact none other than Táraka Brahma. This idea, that Shiva was Parama Puruśa or Táraka Brahma, dawned only vaguely upon the human minds of those days, but found its full expression some time afterwards.

Some ideas arose in the minds of people, particularly sádhakas, that Brahma is the composite form of Parama Puruśa and Paramá Prakṛti; and Shiva was the crystallized manifestation of Brahma. This idea was further developed and took shape long afterwards, during the days of Jain Tantra, Buddhist Tantra, and Post-Shiva Tantra. People were then able to grasp the significance of Shiva Shaktyátmakarṇ Brahma ["Brahma is the composite of Shiva, or Puruśa, and Shakti, or Prakṛti"]. Each and every sádhaka realizes, in the exalted state of spiritual realization, Tvameko dvitvamápanno Shivashaktivibhágashah – "O Lord, You are One. You are witnessing everything as the Supreme Cognitive Principle, and You are also doing everything in the capacity of the Supreme Operative Principle. You are giving pain and misery to Your children with one hand, and with the other, You are wiping the tears from the eyes. On the one hand, You are chiding them in the harshest language, and on the other, You are drawing them close to You and showering Your love on them. You are one and the same Entity, but You express Yourself to both extremes – You are perfect in both ways. Your one role is complementary to the other."

*Kata ye elem jána re bándá kata ye kudrat karo
Sáp haiyá káta re bándá ojhá haiyá jháío*

* * *

*Kata kerámat jána re bándá, kata kerámat jáno
Májh dariyáy jál phyáláiyá dáuṅgáy baesyá táno.*

[I wonder how many qualities You have, how many are Your ways of expression!

On one hand You are the snake that bites, on the other You are the snake charmer that cures.]

[I wonder how many feats You perform – You throw the net in the middle of the sea,
But you draw it in sitting on the shore.]

You are the Cognitive Faculty on the one hand, and the Operative Faculty on the other.

*Satyaloke nirákára mahájyotisvarúpinii
Máyacchádítátmánám carákákárarúpinii;
Máybalkalam samtyajya dvidhábhinná yadonmukhii
Shivashakti vibhágena jáyate srístikalpaná.*

[The Supreme Entity in Satyaloka⁽¹⁾ is without form, a flood of effulgence,
Covered by the coating of Máya (the Creative Principle), united with the Operative Principle like an ungerminated gram.

Later, when the coating of Máya drops off, the two portions of the gram become separated;
Similarly, when Shiva and Shakti are separated, the imagination of creation is aroused.]

The idea that Brahma comprises both Shiva and Shakti was consummated five thousand years after Shiva's advent. This is the idea of Ardha-Náriishvara Shiva. It was imagined that Shiva was one: His right side was like that of Shiva, and His left side was like that of Shakti, or Gaorii. One side was plain white, the other side was fair-complexioned; one side was covered with a tiger skin, the other with linen cloth; on one side there was a hooded snake, on the other, the matted locks of Gaorii's hair. This idea of Ardha-Náriishvara Shiva [Shiva Half Man and Half Woman] represents the inner spirit of Shiva Shaktyátmakam Brahma. True, Ánanda Sútram⁽²⁾ was not composed then, but the idea was there deep in people's minds. This Ardha-Náriishvara Shiva was not known in the days of Shiva Tantra, but was very much present in the days of Post-Shiva Tantra. Later on it was accepted in the Puranic Shiva Cult, but subsequently this idea disappeared from people's minds.

I saw the figure of Ardha-Náriishvara Shiva in one of the 108 temples on the Burdwan-Guskara Road to the west of Burdwan town. This Ardha-Náriishvara Shiva is a personification of a philosophical idea: that Shiva and Shakti – knowledge and energy – work in harmony. Energy is a blind force. A little child may die of electrocution, because electricity is merely a form of energy devoid of consciousness; being a blind force, it never stops to think that it is killing an innocent child. Thus there should be proper coordination between energy and cognition. This energy, unless guided and controlled by consciousness, may indulge in destructive activities. Thus all the actional expressions of Prakrti are performed only on the vast body of Supreme Consciousness. If Shakti takes one step away from the body of Shiva, it may be harmful. So Ardha-Náriishvara Shiva is a symbolic form of this creation by Shiva and Shakti. Shiva is only working as a witnessing entity and controlling the movements of Shakti with His characteristic firmness, simplicity, and love for creation.

*Kii e nirúpama shobhá manorama
Hara Gaorii ek shariire
Shveta piita káy ráuṅgá duti páy
Bhábtí bhábiyá mari re
Ádha bágachála aunge viráje ádha patámbara mohana sáje
Ádha pharii phariá dhari re.*

[What exquisite beauty have Shiva and Párvatii manifested in one body:
One is white, the other is yellow;
When I think of the qualities of those two lotus feet, I am beside myself with joy.
One side of the body is wearing a tiger-skin, the other is covered with fine silk cloth,
And half the head is adorned with a serpent.]

As Shiva desires the well-being of all, He will not allow Prakrti to work unchecked. He will keep her under perfect control, and in order to do that, His simplicity, His honesty, must not be impaired under any circumstances. Even in the inseparable relationship of Shiva and Shakti, Shiva is absolutely simple. Nowhere in His expressions is there any complexity. Even at the time of regulating Prakrti, He is very simple; He is not at all complex. He is discharging His duties in all fields of life, whether big or small, domestic or social, worldly or spiritual, without losing His simplicity. Even when He sets forth to get married, He is always His simple self. His marriage is described in a poem:

*Yabe bibáhe chalilá trilocan, ogo marań, he mor marań
Táńr kata shata chila áyojan, chila kata shata upakarań
Táńr laţpaţ kare bághchal, táńr brśa rahi rahi garaje
Táńr beśtan kari jatájál, yata bhujaungadal taraje
Táńr babam babam báje gál, dole galáy kapál-ábharań
Táńr bisáń phukári uthe tán, ogo marań, he mor marań.*

[When Shiva went for marriage, my God!

There were many arrangements and much paraphernalia:

His tiger-skin was rumpled, and His ox was bellowing at intervals;

Around His matted locks, serpents were hissing.

His puffed cheeks emitting babam babam sounds, His neck adorned with a garland of skulls,

Blowing notes on His horn, oh God! These were the arrangements!]

At the time of His marriage, He carried many things, but those things were very simple. For instance, He had His usual loose tiger skin; His bellowing ox, which was His customary mode of transportation; His matted locks of hair; and His trumpet. Thus Shiva was simple and straightforward in all respects. The greatest thing people should learn from Shiva is this sort of straightforwardness and simplicity, and along with that, unflinching devotion to duty.

This simplicity on the part of Shiva has become proverbial. Mahaprabhu Chaitanya lost his father when he was very young. One Ramchandra Ghose, a certain wealthy gentleman of Nabadwip, took the responsibility to maintain his poor Brahman family. He became the guardian of Nimai-Mahaprabhu. At the time of marrying Nimai, the gentleman said that Nimai's marriage would by no means be a silent ceremony like those of the Brahmans. "I won't be satisfied with a simple marriage ceremony like that of Shiva, just blowing His trumpet. I will see Nimai is married like Kayastha [upper-caste] boys, to the sound of dhák, dhol [heavy drums] and long horns."

Yes, this is Shiva, at whose marriage only trumpets were blown – even long horns were not blown. Perhaps the bride had on a fine wedding dress and ornaments, but the bridegroom certainly did not wear a silken dhoti and cádár [wrapper], but merely wore his usual tiger-skin as He took His seat at the marriage place. The bride might have the required headdress for marriage, but the bridegroom did not have a shining headdress. Instead, He had hissing snakes around His head. It was not the marriage of a Kayastha youth, after all – it was the marriage of Shiva.

There was no pomp and show in any aspect of Shiva's life. Shiva, who had countless occult powers, before whom everyone bowed with bended knee, was completely indifferent to His powers. This greatness of Shiva was a distinct trait of His character. While some gods and goddesses wore various types of ornaments – some had crowns on their heads, some bangles on their wrists, some earrings, some gold-decorated girdles around their waists – Shiva had no ornaments. His ornaments were His followers, His devotees – the common people, whom the Aryans branded as "ghosts". The indigenous people were somewhat dark, and the Aryans were fair-complexioned, so the Aryans despised those followers of Shiva – the common people of India – as "ghosts". In fact they were not ghosts but the devotees of Shiva. In Sanskrit, they were called gańa [mass of followers].

These people were the ornaments of Shiva. They made up Shiva's family. His joys and sorrows, pleasures and pains centred around them. And Shiva's family meant this universe. All the persons of this universe, whether frustrated or joyful, educated or uneducated, devotees or opponents, were included in His family. No one was excluded, because all together made up Shiva's golden home in His thatched house. Who could be excluded? So the one who was at the head of such a big family became their god.

Some people may criticize Shiva in public, but at heart they will praise Him. Because if other gods are displeased, they will curse the people and bring about their ruin; but Shiva never cursed anyone. He might have been mentally hurt, but He would not curse anyone, He would not harm anyone. If a person criticized Shiva and after that said mentally to Him, "O Shiva, merciful Lord, the easily-satisfied one, tell me if you are forgiving me or not," He would pardon then and there. Even if someone said to Him in anger, "You must pardon me," Shiva would pardon him. That is why Shiva was so close to the hearts of the common people. He belonged to one and all. Hence even to this day, Shiva's words are still ringing in the infinite blue void with profound and serene modulations –

*Keu to ámár par nay
Sabái ápan vishvamay
Ámi shudhu hási
Shudhu bhálabási*

*Náshi klesharáshi
Dii abhay
Keu to ámar par nay.*

[No one is unrelated to Me.
All in this universe are My own.
I only laugh
I only love
I remove their sufferings
And their fears.
No one is unrelated to me.]

That is all about Ardha-Náriishvara Shiva. It is a philosophical idea.

Now we should discuss, one after another, those who are claimed to be related to Shiva. We have already discussed Durgá, Kálii, Tára, etc. Now let us say something about Lakśmii.

The mythological story goes like this: When the gods and the demons were churning the ocean, many valuable things were recovered from the bottom of the sea. Of these, the most notable things were the mammoth, the heavenly tree Párijáta, nectar, etc. One most important entity thus recovered was the goddess Lakśmii: she arose from the seabed in the process of churning. According to mythology, she was married to Náráyaṇa. So one thing is proven here: that Lakśmii was not Shiva's daughter – she arose from the seabed. The second thing is that this so-called event of churning the ocean as mentioned in the mythology took place 5500 years after Shiva. So from that point of view also, Lakśmii cannot be Shiva's daughter. According to mythology, Shiva was also involved in the event of churning – after the churning was over.

There is another allusion to Lakśmii. It is said that once when Lord Krśṇa was absent from His capital, Dwaraka, a demon named Narakasura launched an attack on Dwaraka. I have already told you that asura does not mean any weird creature. They are a group, a community, of people who originally lived in Assyria. Later on the Scythians, both in India and outside, were a branch of the Asura community. The Scythians were mainly earth-coloured; they were short but stocky. They were not actually Asuras, but a sub-tribe of the Asuras. As I said, Krśṇa was absent from His capital when it was raided by Narakasura. Then Satyabhámá fought a battle against this Asura and killed him.

That was the fourteenth day of the dark fortnight. The Asura having been killed in the battle, the people of Dwaraka illumined the city with fourteen oil-lamps. That day is still observed as Naraka Caturdashii in western India, and the same day in eastern India is called Bhúta Caturdashii. And the following day, eastern India celebrates Shyámá Pújá, the worship of the goddess Shyámá.

I have already told you about Shyámá –

*Shiitakále bhaveduśṇá griísme ca sukhashiitalá;
Atasii puśpavarrábhá sá Shyámá parikiirtitá.*

[One who is warm in winter and cool in summer,
Who has the soothing colour of the atasii flower, is called Shyámá.]

But in Dwaraka the next day, there was great festivity: feasting, merrymaking, fireworks, etc., and that evening Satyabhámá was worshipped by the people. Since that day, Satyabhámá has been worshipped as Mahálakśmii, and the people of those regions open new charge accounts on that day.

This worship of Mahálakśmii was accepted by the Puranic Shakti Cult. In some places, the worship of Mahálakśmii is preceded by the worship of Alakśmii, a goddess representing misfortune. This Mahálakśmii was the wife of Shrii Krśṇa, and her name originally was Satyabhámá. This Lakśmii was not of the Puranic Age because Krśṇa was far older than the age of the Puranas; and this Mahálakśmii was born 3500 years later than Shiva, so she cannot be the daughter of Shiva.

We come across another Lakśmii in Jain Tantra, Buddhist Tantra and Post-Shiva Tantra, described as Kamalá, one of the Ten Mahávidyás. Many people wrongly believe that Mahálakśmii and Kamalá are one and the same entity. This is not correct. Mahálakśmii was Satyabhámá, Krśṇa's wife. I have already said that the concept of Dashamahávidyá was a synthesis of Buddhist Tantra, Jain Tantra and Post-Shiva Tantra. This concept of Dashamahávidyá evolved by taking certain entities from each and every Tantra. So this Kamalá of Dashamahávidyá is not the real Lakśmii, and this concept of Kamalá had its origin in the days of Dashamahávidyá, which was more than 5500 years after Shiva. So she cannot be the daughter of Shiva either.

People thought of them as one and the same goddess during the days of the Puranic Shakti Cult.

*Kamalá acalá han parishram guñe;
Álasye Alakśmii ási báñe dine dine.*

[Kamalá remains steady in the house of a person if the person labours hard;
But if one is idle, then Alakśmii takes her place there, and the person's misfortunes pile up.]

This couplet proves that people have started identifying Lakśmii with Kamalá.

Each of the Ten Mahávidyás was considered a wife of Shiva, so Kamalá cannot be the daughter of Shiva. Regarding Kamalá, it is said, Káñcanakántih sudiipatá sumanohará Kamalá harahrdivásinii – “Her colour is golden and shining, very lovely, and she is rooted in the heart of Shiva; she is the wife of Shiva.” So this clearly shows that Lakśmii, or Kamalá, is not the daughter of Shiva and Durgá, as people think.

The concept of Durgá arose in the Puranic days, only about 1300 years ago, and the concept of Lakśmii is a little older than that. The concept of Mahálakśmii is about 3500 years old, and other concepts are about 1750 years old. So Lakśmii could never be the daughter of Shiva or Durgá (Durgá has no relation to Shiva, because the idea of Durgá came 5500 years later than Shiva).

We come across another laokik goddess who is neither the wife of Lord Krśńa, nor Kamalá of Dashamahávidyá, nor the goddess Lakśmii who arose from the bottom of the sea at the time of churning. She is the laokik goddess Lakśmii, the presiding deity of wealth. In many parts of eastern India, the people perform daily or weekly worship of this deity. She is neither a Puranic goddess nor a Vedic goddess nor a Tantric goddess; she is purely a laokik goddess, and there is no bijja mantra, or acoustic root, for this goddess, nor is there any dhyána mantra or prañáma mantra for her. People worship this deity by reciting rhymed verses in Bengali; not even the religious services of a priest are required to worship this goddess. She has no relation whatsoever with Shiva.

Thus analysing from the different sources – history, mythology, Tantric texts, etc., we come to the conclusion that the goddess Lakśmii is in no way related to Shiva.

Now the mythological goddess Lakśmii and the laokik goddess Lakśmii are said to have an owl as their mount, whereas Kamalá of Dashamahávidyá is said to have an elephant as her mount, so these two goddesses cannot be one. Naturally, now, no one should be mistaken about Lakśmii.

Then comes Sarasvatii, the goddess of learning. Sarasvatii is not a Vedic goddess. In the Vedas there is mention of Sarasvatii, but that Sarasvatii is not a goddess but a river. Let us analyse the etymological meaning of the word sarasvatii. The word saras in Sanskrit means a big lake of water, or white effulgence, and the entity who has this white effulgence is sarasvatii (saras + matup + ii, a feminine suffix). So sarasvatii means one who has this white effulgence or who has a big lake. In the Vedas we come across the mention of Sarasvatii – Ambitame nadiitame deviitame Sarasvatii. This Sarasvatii is the name of a river, and the river is so useful, so beneficial for the people that it is revered as the greatest goddess.

The goddess Sarasvatii has no relation with this river. There is a story about the River Sarasvatii. In ancient times there were two rivers, Carmañvatii and Drśadvatii, in central India. The history behind the name of the river Carmañvatii is this: When the Aryans were living in the Rajasthan area in the western part of India, they found many animals there, because there were forests and sufficient rainfall. They used to perform sacrificial rites by killing these animals. There is a story that once they performed a sacrificial ritual killing hundreds of thousands of animals; the heaps of those animals' skins was as high as a mountain, and blood streamed down unceasingly from that pile of skins. It looked as if a river was flowing. After a long distance, this stream of blood flowed into the Ganges River. As the stream of blood flowing from the pile of animal skins took the form of a river, it was named Carmañvatii in Sanskrit.⁽³⁾ The present name of the river is Chambal.

Then there was another river, Drśadvatii by name. This river originates from the Vindhya Mountain in the Bákhelkhañda area, and flows northwards towards the Ganges. Drśad in Sanskrit means “pebbles”. As the river was full of pebbles, the people called it “Drśadvatii”. This river used to flow northwards, and the Carmañvatii used to flow towards the east. Further on, they used to meet at a point south of Prayaga, and then they used to flow together past Kaoshámbii, into the Ganges near Prayaga. The combined flow of the two rivers, Carmañvatii and Drśadvatii, became known as Sarasvatii.

Perhaps you know that many ruins have been discovered at this Kaoshámbii. Many archaeological relics of the days of King Harśavardhana of Sthániishvar have been found there. The first seal in Bengali script, used by King Harśavardhana, was found here at Kaoshámbii.

Now, as the river Yamuna flowed from the west, the river Ganges, or Gaungá, from the northwest, and the river Sarasvatii from the south, and the three rivers met at Prayaga. But once there was a tremendous earthquake in central India, as a result of which the Carmañvatii River could no longer flow eastward; so the Carmañvatii River, instead of flowing eastward, flowed into the Yamuna River. The Chambal River these days flows directly into the Yamuna. The Drśadvatii River cannot meet the Chambal River in the north either, and instead flows towards the northeast and empties into the river Shon. The combined flow of the Carmañvatii and Drśadvatii which made up the river Sarasvatii is dry now. So now only two rivers instead of three meet at Prayaga.

Anyway, the modern name of the Drśadvatii is Ghághar or Ghághrá. If any of you go to Rewa city, you will find there the Drśadvatii River, which took a new name, Gharghará, which means that the water of the river emits a rough sound, because it contains large rocks and pebbles. This Sarasvatii River watered arid Madhya Pradesh, as a result of which this area – the northern part of Bákhelkhańda – became fertile. So people out of reverence used to call it a goddess. This is the Vedic river Sarasvatii; she is not a woman, nor a goddess, nor is she the daughter of Shiva.

Ambitame – “O Mother”; nadiitame – “O greatest river”; deviitame – “O greatest goddess”. This is the literal meaning of this Sanskrit line. Though there is the mention of Sarasvatii, it is the name of a river. So it is proved that Sarasvatii is not a Vedic goddess.

Now let us consider the second part of the question. I do not accept the view that Sarasvatii is the daughter of Shiva. Next I shall discuss what the Puranas have to say about Sarasvatii.

That Sarasvatii is not the daughter of Shiva is proven by another piece of evidence, the greatest evidence. You know that all recognized gods and goddesses have their respective bijja mantras, dhyána mantras, and prańáma mantras. So regarding Sarasvatii, it is said:

*Kajjalapúritālocanabhāre
Stanayugashobhitāmuktāhāre
Viināpustakarinjitahaste
Bhagavati bhāratī devi namaste.*

[I salute thee, O goddess of knowledge,
Whose beautiful eyes are adorned with collyrium,
Whose breast is decorated with a pearl necklace,
Whose one hand holds a viinā, and other hand holds a book.]

Now in the days of Shiva the viinā was in use. The viinā is a very ancient Indian musical instrument. So if Sarasvatii lived in Shiva’s time and if she had a viinā in her hand, it would not be surprising at all. The viinā is the simplest form of stringed instrument, and from this, other stringed instruments evolved later, some in India, some in Central Asia, and some in Áryanyavraja, whose present name is Iran (Persia). In the Persian language, si means “three”, so the instrument having three strings is called sitar. Thus other musical instruments evolved.

So there is nothing surprising if Sarasvatii has a viinā in her hand; but what is surprising is the book in her hand. She is described as viināpustakarinjitahaste [“with a viinā and a book in her hands”]. The fact is, the people in Shiva’s time did not know how to read and write. So how could there be a book? So the author of the Purāńa is caught in his own trap.

As people were not acquainted with letters, it was not possible for anyone to write on palm leaves or birch bark, and certainly there could be no question of a book bound with a hard cover. So if Sarasvatii has a book in her hand, she certainly does not belong to Shiva’s time, and hence she is not the daughter of Shiva either.

Moreover, there is a difference of opinion among the Puranas themselves. Some say that Sarasvatii is the daughter of Brahmá and the wife of Viśńu. Others say that she is the daughter of Shiva and the wife of Brahmá.

The authors of the Puranas are not at all in agreement on this point, and this is also a strong proof that Sarasvatii is not the daughter of Shiva; because Shiva was born seven thousand years ago, while these Puranas were written only 1500 years ago.⁽⁴⁾

There is yet another proof that Sarasvatii was not the daughter of Shiva, nor the daughter of Brahmá, nor the wife of Brahmá. And what is the proof, that trump card? In the dhyána mantra of Sarasvatii, it is said –

*Yá kundendu tuśáraháradhavalá, yá shubhravastrávrta;
Yá viińávaradańdashobhitakará, yá shvetapadmásaná.
Ya Brahmácyutamaheshaprabhrtibhih devaeh sadávanditá;
Sá mám pátu bhagavatii Sarasvatii nihsheśajádyápahá.*

[May the goddess Sarasvatii, who is as white as the kunda flower (one of the whitest species of flowers), as white as the moon, as white as the snow,
Who is clad in white clothes, whose hands are adorned with the beautiful viińá, who is seated on a white lotus,
Who is worshipped by Brahmá, Viśńu and Maheshvara, and who removes the staticity of the universe –
May she always protect us.]

The third line says that the goddess Sarasvatii is always worshipped by Brahmá, Viśńu and Shiva. Now, had Sarasvatii been Shiva's daughter, how could she be worshipped by Shiva? Similarly, had she been the daughter or wife of Brahmá, Brahmá certainly would not worship her. Again, had she been the wife of Viśńu, Viśńu would certainly not be expected to worship her. So all the stories of the Puranas are refuted by one shloka, or by one line of the shloka. Thus it is proved conclusively that Sarasvatii is not the daughter or the wife of Brahmá, Viśńu or Shiva.

Now the question arises, how did the worship of Sarasvatii begin? You know that in the days of Vajrayána Buddhist Tantra there was a deity named Tára. She is the second Mahávidyá of Dashamahávidyá. Regarding Tára it is said,

*Garvitadánavagarvakharvákrti khađgakharpará Niila Sarasvatii;
Sarvasaobhágyapradáyinii kartrii namaste Tárárúpá tárińii.*

[I Salute Thee, O blue Sarasvatii in the form of Tára the Liberator, who humbles the pride of the arrogant demons with sword in sheath, who grants all good fortune to her devotees.]

During the days of Vajrayána Buddhist Tantra, the one who was worshipped in India was called Ugratára, the one who was worshipped in China was called Bhrámarii Tára, and the one who was worshipped in Kímpuruśavarśa, or Tibet, was called Vajratára.

There is an interesting story behind the name of Kímpuruśavarśa. In Tibet, the dresses of men and women are somewhat similar – loose garments. So it was difficult to distinguish between a man and a woman from a distance. Kímpuruśa means, "Are they male?" And varśa in Sanskrit means "land"; so Kímpuruśavarśa means a land where the people find it difficult to distinguish between males and females.

Now, the Vajratára who was worshipped in Tibet was also known as Niila Sarasvatii. In this mantra also the word "Niila Sarasvatii" has been used. You can see some images of Niila Sarasvatii in a temple in Bodhgaya; she was a blue-coloured goddess.⁽⁵⁾

It is somewhat irrelevant to mention here, but Maharshi Vashistha was a man of the age of Buddhist Tantra. His book, Yogaváshistha, or Ádhyátmarámáyána, has no relation to the Rámáyána by Valmiki; it is a book on Buddhist Tantra written in Sanskrit. Maharshi Vashistha went to China to master the Chinese school of Tantra, and from there he brought an image of Tára and established it at Tárápiitha of Birbhum District in West Bengal. That is, Tára is also a Buddhist Tantric deity, not a Puranic goddess. However, this Niila Sarasvatii was later changed into All-White Sarasvatii and accepted in the Puranic Shakti Cult. She no longer remained blue; she became white. This all happened 1300 years ago, much later than Shiva. If you ever happen to discover some images of All-White Sarasvatii in the ruins during excavation, whether those images are complete or fragmented, you should know that none of those images is older than 1300 years. This All-White Sarasvatii, the Puranic goddess, was not widely worshipped either, neither during the Mughal period, nor even during the Pathan period.⁽⁶⁾

When worshipping this white Sarasvatii in the Pathan period, the people would use books as symbols of the goddess. Some Europeans in the early days of the British rule jokingly pointed out, "You have so many gods and goddesses! So why do you worship the goddess Sarasvatii as a book? Why not as a goddess?" After that time, in the city of Calcutta, there arose a system to worship the image of the goddess Sarasvatii. So the worship of this All-White Sarasvatii is recent, and she has no relation to Shiva.

The concept of Sarasvatii arose only 1300 years ago, 5700 years later than Shiva. The goddess Tára of Buddhist Tantra was worshipped with the bija mantra, traém, whereas Sarasvatii, the Puranic goddess, was worshipped with the bija mantra, Aeín Sarasvatyae namah. There are some people who think that Sarasvatii is a goddess transformed from Prajñāpāramitā of Mahāyāna Buddhist Tantra. This is not correct, because though both goddesses are the presiding deities of learning, they are so fundamentally different from each other that one cannot be the transformation of the other.

Hence, we come to the final conclusion that Lakśmī is not the daughter of Shiva. She has no relationship whatsoever with Shiva. Nor has she any relationship with Pārvatī or with Durgā, another Puranic goddess. The same is the case with Sarasvatī. She has no relationship with Shiva; she is not the daughter of Shiva. The Sarasvatī of the Vedas is the River Sarasvatī, and the Sarasvatī of Tantra is Nīla Sarasvatī, or the goddess Tára. And Sarasvatī the Puranic goddess has been worshipped only since the British period. Prior to that she was not worshipped with the use of an image.

23 May 1982, Calcutta

Footnotes

- (1) This creation is divided into seven strata called lokas; the highest is Satyaloka. –Trans.
- (2) Shrii Shrii Ānandamūrti, Ānanda Sūtram, 1962. –Trans.
- (3) Carma means “skin”; so the river which originated in a pile of animal skins was called “Carmaivati”. –Trans.
- (4) Had the idea of Sarasvatī come into existence long before the writing of the Puranas, the discrepancies would have been resolved before they were written. –Trans.
- (5) Nīla means “blue”. –Trans.
- (6) That is, she was not worshipped in the form of an idol. –Trans.

All Bask In the Glory of Shiva – 3 (Discourse 8)

You know that humans are gregarious beings. There are some living beings who live in groups or clans, and some who live in isolation. In very olden days, human beings lived in clans, and the leader of such a clan would invariably be a lady then known as the gotramātrkā [clan-mother]. But subsequently this system was replaced by another system in which the leader of the clan would be a man, known as gotrapitā [clan-father]. When the leadership of a clan was vested in the clan-mother, there was both a matrilineal order and a matriarchal system of inheritance.

An example of the matrilineal order: Suppose a person asked your name. You would reply, “My name is such-and-such, my mother’s name is such-and-such, and my grandmother’s name is such-and-such.” No one bothered to know who the father was, and in fact, there was no system of marriage prior to Shiva. Shiva was the first person to marry, and the oldest system of marriage is known as the Shiva system of marriage. This introduction of the system of marriage raised human beings one step higher than the animals.

But everyone knew who the mother was, so the order was a matrilineal order. Often the sons were named after their mothers. For instance, if the mother’s name was Maodgalī, the son would be named Maodgalyāyan; if her name was Rúpasāri, the son would be named Sāriputta. If the mother’s name was Mahāpātālī, obviously the son’s name would be Pātālīputra – the one who built the city of Patna. Thus the sons would be known to the society through their mothers. If the mother’s name was Prthā or Prthu, the son’s name would be Pārtha. One of the names of Arjuna was Pārtha. Arjuna’s mother’s name was Kuntī, so Arjuna was also known as Kaunteya. In those days of matrilineal order, the mother’s name was very important.

And the system of inheritance was matriarchal, that is, the daughters would inherit the property. From the mother, the daughter would receive the property; from her, her daughter; and so on. This sort of matriarchal system of inheritance is still found in Meghalaya, among the Nayars of Kerala and also partly, not fully, among the people of Bengal.

Later the matrilineal order was replaced by the patrilineal order. If you asked people about their gotra, they would at once mention the name of the first gotrapitā. Gradually the system of inheritance changed to a patriarchal one. The son would inherit his father’s property; from him, his son would inherit the property; and so on. The daughters were almost completely deprived of ancestral property.

In some places there is a mixed system, as in Bengal, where both the sons and daughters inherit paternal property. In Bengal a sister's sons are entitled to inherit their maternal uncle's property after his death. This is in contrast to the system practised in other parts of India, where the property is not transferred to a different gotra because the system is a totally patriarchal one. Anyway, in those days of matrilineal order, women enjoyed unlimited freedom and influence in society, while men had practically no rights at all. I say that this was not an ideal system. In the patriarchal social system, men enjoy unlimited freedom, which is not an ideal arrangement either.

*Sabái mánuśa, sabáikár
Niktir ojane samán adhikár.*

[All are human beings, All are entitled to equal rights.]

The way women are being deprived of their rights today is something criminal.

In those days of matrilineal order, people introduced the system of mother worship, and from that emerged the custom of cańdíi pújá, the worship of cańdíká shakti, the power of the group-mother. In those days the leader of a clan would invariably be a woman, a clan-mother.

*Yá devii sarvabhútesú Matrrúpeńa samsthitá
Namastasyae namastasyae namastasyae namo namah.
Yá devii sarvabhútesú Shaktirúpeńa samsthitá
Namastasyae namastasyae namastasyae namo namah.*

[I offer my deepest salutations to that goddess who is in all created beings in the form of the Universal Mother. I offer my deepest salutations to the goddess who is immanent in all created beings in the form of the Supreme Force.]

Thus the people, being inspired by this idea, developed the system of mother worship in early stages of the Puranic Shakti Cult, in the last phase of Post-Shiva Tantra. Alongside this developed the custom of kumárii pújá [virgin worship], just to please the future clan-mothers. So the custom of cańdíi pújá gave rise to the custom of virgin worship. One who is a maiden today will be a clan-mother in due course; so it was wise to please these clan-mothers-to-be by offering them something.

Thus we see that cańdíi pújá or kumárii pújá was essentially a social affair, but in Post-Shiva Tantra and in the first phase of the Puranic Shakti Cult, a religious tinge was added to it. This is how the worship of virgins originated. Now this system has almost disappeared.

The situation changed a great deal in subsequent periods. The matrilineal order was stopped, and the supremacy of gotramátá came to an end. Then came the age of the patriarchal system, and along with it the leadership of the clan vested in the gotrapitá.

The same tradition perpetuated itself even in the patriarchal system; that is, the head of the clan had to be kept in good humour with gifts and offerings. He enjoyed unlimited power, as the clan-mother did in the heyday of the matrilineal order.

Cańdíká shakti is the cańda shakti, the great power exercised by the clan-mother. This cańdíi shakti or cańda shakti reached its climax during the days of Post-Shiva Tantra and the Puranic Shakti Cult. We shall say more about the Puranic Shakti Cult later. So you understand how the concept of cańdíi originated.

Now, unless related to Shiva, no one will be given any recognition or status; so there was no other way than to declare Cańdíi to be the wife of Shiva, although the idea of cańdíi represents the social history of collective living of prehistoric human beings. The prehistoric age has also its own history – of course, unwritten history. Many things happen which remain unrecorded; often people suffer from agonies which remain unexpressed. The sufferers have to endure silently, suppressing their inner pains. Similarly, the prehistoric age carries its unrecorded history silently.

In the case of Cańdíi, an attempt was made to find some relationship between Cańdíi and Shiva, and it was given a religious and social colour. During the days of the supremacy of the clan-mothers, they were approached with folded hands and flattered in all respects, and people requested everything from them – food, clothes, etc. The subservient people would pray to them, Rúpań dehi, jayań dehi, yasho dehi, dviśo jahi – "Give me beauty, give me victory, give me fame and kill my enemies." Without the express approval of the clan-mother, the other members of the clan would not fight for victory. Hence the prayer, "Kill my enemies."

The days of caṇḍikā shakti in this world passed, and the males became the heads of clans: the patriarchal system came into being. Now both the patrilineal order of society and the patriarchal system are found everywhere in the world.

The members of a tribe used to live in a group, and each group had its leader. All the members of the society used to obey his orders. He was always given the highest honour and the first preference, and was honoured first in all social functions. In Sanskrit the word for group is gaṇa, so gaṇeśha or gaṇapati means the group leader, the head of the clan. The Bengali or Sanskrit equivalent for gaṇapati is dalapati. From dalapati, it becomes da-la-a-i or dalai; in Bengali dalui. There is a surname Dalui in Bengali.

The idea of Gaṇeśha is a prehistoric one: it proves the supremacy of the group leader, or the head of the clan, of prehistoric days. With the decline of the matrilineal order, and with the increasing growth of the patrilineal order, the group leader became more and more powerful. Thus Gaṇeśha precedes all other entities in order of preference. Some people humorously say that since the worship of Gaṇeśha precedes the worship of all other gods, Gaṇeśha must have been worshipped just before Shiva's marriage was solemnized.⁽¹⁾ This may be true, perhaps he was worshipped. But such worship may indeed not have been performed, because though Shiva was not an Aryan, the marriage was held at the residence of the father of Gaorii, who was an Aryan girl.⁽²⁾

This Gaṇeśha was the son neither of Shiva nor of Párvatii nor of Durgá, because he was a group deity, a social deity of prehistoric times. His worship has nothing to do with dharma: the worship of a group leader is in no way related to dharma. That is why the Sanskrit equivalents for gaṇeśha are gaṇapati and vináyaka. Vináyaka means an ideal leader, a very powerful leader.

So when we reflect on the prehistoric stage of human society, we find that Gaṇeśha has no relation to Shiva or His wife Párvatii, far less to Durgá, a Puranic goddess who came later than Shiva by many thousand years. Now people may ask two things about Gaṇeśha: Why is he so fat? And why does his face resemble that of an elephant?

There must be some reasons for this. In my childhood days, when I was reluctant to eat rice, my aunt would psychologically try to make me eat it. She would say, "Why don't you like to eat rice? Look, Brother Gaṇeśha is so fat because he eats a lot of rice!" Then she would recite,

*Gaṇeśha Dádá pettí nádá
Bhát kháy gádá gádá.*

[Brother Gaṇeśha has a belly like a pot;
The reason is, he eats a lot.]

On hearing this, I would burst into laughter, and taking advantage of this opportunity, she would push morsels of rice into my mouth.

Why is he so fat? All people want their leader to be a stout, strong personality. With this end in view, when they started making images of Gaṇeśha, they created a powerfully-built figure. This is the secret behind Gaṇeśha's heavy build. The members of a particular clan would naturally desire their group leader to be a strong and stout person: "Our leader – is he an ordinary person? No, he is not just like any Tom, Dick or Harry. The face of our leader is like that of the biggest animal in the world!" So an elephant's head was placed on the body of Gaṇeśha. Thus the primitive humans have struggled up to the present day; and that is why they portrayed Gaṇeśha as a fat god with the face of an elephant.

But then he was elevated to the status of a god of religion in the days of the Puranic Gaṇapati Cult. What is this Gaṇapati Cult? There is a story in the Puranas that the mother of Gaṇeśha was Durgá. Now when Gaṇeśha was born, his maternal uncle, Shani, came to pay a visit to his nephew. In mythology, Shani is the name of a god and a planet also: Shani, or Saturn, is one of the planets of the sun. However, when Shani's eyes fell on the newborn babe, the child's head disappeared. What was to be done in that predicament? So the severed head of an elephant was grafted onto the child's body, and since then Gaṇeśha's face has resembled that of an elephant. This is just a mythological story, and the story has nothing to do with Shiva and Párvatii, for Gaṇeśha is the son neither of Shiva nor of Párvatii. According to mythology, he is the son of Durgá, a Puranic goddess.

Thus far we have discussed the physical appearance of Gaṇeśha. But this is not all; one more interesting thing should be mentioned here, which concerns the collective psychology of human beings. You know that the ancient environment in which human beings lived was fraught with danger on all sides. Not only that, there were frequent severe clashes among individuals and also among clans. Thus in those days the growth in the number of members of a society was very important; and this is the reason

why ancient humans started phallic worship. Now, pigs and mice multiply faster than other animals, but pigs are dirty creatures – they eat dirty things – so pigs could not be considered as a fit mount for the group leader. For that reason mice were considered: they also multiply by leaps and bounds. People wanted their leader's mount to be a creature whose numbers increased in the shortest possible time; then naturally their numbers would also multiply, giving them an edge over their enemies.

Even today, in those areas of India, particularly the western areas, where there is the influence of Gaṇapati or Gaṇesha, the mice are not killed. There are temples in many parts of India where the mice are worshipped. Thousands and thousands of mice are heartily fed there; nobody kills them. Some people say humorously, "Gaṇesha is such a corpulent person, he must be very wealthy also. He must be the owner of warehouses, and wherever there is a warehouse there must be mice. That's why mice are selected as mounts for Gaṇesha." This is just a joke, not a fact.

Now, it is necessary to say something here about Gaṇesha's wife. You will understand later why it is necessary. By now you must have understood the origin of the idea of Gaṇesha. He represents the group leader of the prehistoric humans. But in the age of the Puranas, many, many stories were created about the different gods and goddesses. According to one story, the wife of Gaṇesha is Tulasii, but according to some Puranas, Śaśthii is the wife of Gaṇesha. In Puranic society, the goddess Śaśthii is worshipped once a month after a child is born. According to other Puranas, Śaśthii is the wife of Kārttika, while in some local Puranas in certain parts of India, the wife of Gaṇesha is the goddess Santośii. So there is a tremendous difference of opinion among the Puranas. Now the question arises, "What about Kalābao, who is beside Gaṇesha? Is she not then the wife of Gaṇesha?"

The prehistoric human beings were completely unaware of chemistry. They would procure medicines mostly from plants and herbs. They considered those plants and herbs having medicinal values as gods. In fact, all the important āyurvedik treatises mentioned that almost all trees and plants have some kind of medicinal value. But of those trees and plants, the few that have greater medicinal value are more loved and respected by the people. They take special care to plant those species.

The prehistoric human beings did not know the science of pharmacology; they directly used the plants and herbs to cure diseases. In those days people, particularly in India, came in contact with nine kinds of special plants having special values, such as medicinal value, food value, etc. They worshipped these nine kinds of plants not as gods and goddesses of religion, but as very useful things. Of course godhood was imposed on trees afterwards, and I will mention later, when I describe the teachings of Shiva, what Shiva said in this connection. These nine kinds of plants, in which the people discovered special medicinal and food values, were kadali, kacu, haridrā, jayantii, ashoka, bilva, dādimba, mān and dhānya.⁽³⁾

Kadali is a very nutritious food item. In case of intermittent fever, kadali [plantain] is a very good medicine. Moreover, it helps the liver, pancreas, and kidneys to function smoothly, and it is also a good medicine for dysentery. Moreover, it is an ideal food for those mothers whose children die young. Overripe bananas (preferably with black patches) are a very good medicine for children who develop rickets because of the scarcity of milk after their mother's death. If you make a paste of them, this has even greater value than mother's milk. In the case of calves who lose their mothers, they too become healthy if they are fed one part paste of overripe bananas to two parts chātu.⁽⁴⁾ Thus plantains and bananas have numerous qualities, and hence the people of those days began to worship them.

The second plant is kacu, arum. Arum has less food value, but it is very good for the kidneys.

The third plant is haridrā, turmeric. Turmeric is a good spice and is highly antiseptic also. Here haridrā does not mean dry turmeric, but green turmeric (kāncā halud) taken fresh from the earth. The turmeric which is dried in the sun is called shuṇṭ halud, which people buy in the market for cooking purposes. Green turmeric is not used in cooking; it has a poisonous effect. People may die if they consume much of it. But it is antiseptic; it cures skin diseases and purifies the blood. However, it is so poisonous in large amounts that even crocodiles die of it.

When many people gather together in one place, there is every possibility of the spread of disease. So there was a practice in ancient Bengal and India that before any social festival, people would bathe, applying a paste made from green turmeric. And this practice continues to some extent even today; normally it is done before weddings.

Next is jayantii. Its roots have great medicinal value, especially for white leprosy. In fact, jayantii is a medicine for four out of the seven kinds of discolouring skin diseases. That is why the people used to worship jayantii.

Next is ashoka, which is called in Hindi siitá ashoka. Simply ashoka, in Hindi, is devaduru [pine-tree]. But the ashoka which has medicinal value is siitá ashoka. It is an ideal medicine for all kinds of female diseases. The wine made out of ashoka is ashokariśta or ashokásava. Thus ashoka has great medicinal value.

Next is bilva, bel-fruit. Unripe bel is the best medicine for all stomach diseases. Unripe bel should be eaten after roasting; ripe bel is not very good. Bil means "minute hole": the fruit which enters the minute holes and does good to the stomach is called bilva. Because of its extraordinary qualities, it has another name – shriiphala ["a fruit with excellent qualities"].

Next is dádimba. Its bark, roots and fruits are all very good medicines for all kinds of female diseases. In áyurvedik schools of medicine, as practised both in India and in China, these qualities of dádimba are recognized. Next is mán. Of all the varieties of starchy food that help in building flesh in the human body, mán is unique. It has better qualities than potatoes or even jackfruit seeds.

Jackfruit seeds have two-and-a-half times more food value than potatoes. Prior to the arrival of potatoes in India, people here used to eat jackfruit seeds. And mán is even higher in food value than jackfruit seeds. Besides this, mán has a cooling effect on the body. It is a good medicine in the summer, when the body becomes very heated and people get nosebleeds. It is both food and medicine.

Next is dhánya, paddy. It has numerous qualities. One of the common uses of rice is this: one can easily prepare wine from it, and from the wine, various types of medicine can be prepared. People often utilized this quality of rice in those days.

Because of the special qualities of these nine kinds of plants, people had great reverence for them. They used to worship these plants by putting vermilion marks on them. Later, during the days of Post-Shiva Tantra, these nine plants were considered to be the nine types of expression of the internal powers of cańdiká shakti, which we are discussing. Otherwise, how could they have so many qualities? This is how people thought at that time.

These special powers of cańdiká shakti, as manifested in kadalii (in fact, these things are all the imagination of the authors of the Puranas) were known as Brahmánii shakti. The divine power latent in arum was called Káliká shakti. The one in turmeric was Durgá shakti. The power in jayantii was Kárttikii shakti. The one found in ashoka was named Shokarahitá shakti. The one in bilva was Shivá. The power in dádimba was named Raktadantiká. The power in mán was called Cámuńdá. And finally, the divine power in paddy was named Lakśmii. Even to this day, illiterate villagers, and sometimes literate people also, say "O Mother Lakśmii," and salute in reverence when their feet accidentally trample grains of rice.

Now the collective name of all nine kinds of divine power of cańdiká shakti latent in the aforesaid plants is Navadurgá, and the collective name of these nine kinds of plants is Navapatriká.⁽⁵⁾ When the concept of Durgá developed in the days of the Puranas, about 1300 years ago, the worship of this Navapatriká was introduced simultaneously. Idols came later, idols having eight or ten hands.

Of these nine plants, the plantain plant was dressed in a sari and placed at the side of Gańesha. Now the plant thus dressed looks like a woman standing beside Gańesha, a woman with a veil on her head. People started thinking that she was the wife of Gańesha and the daughter-in-law of Durgá. But it was not so. Actually the plantain plant represents the Brahmánii shakti, one of the supposed divine powers of cańdiká shakti, not anyone's wife.

Let me give you one more proof that Brahmánii shakti has no relation to Gańesha. According to the ancient Aryan and non-Aryan Tantric system, wives should take their position on the left side of the husband. So one of the Sanskrit equivalents of "wife" is váma. Váma means one who stands on the left. The famous Bháratacandra has written in one of the poems,

*Annapúrriá uttarilá gáunganiir tiire
"Pár kara" baliyá dákilá páťaniire.
Sei gháťe kheyá dey Iishvarii páťanii
Tvaráy ánilá naoká vámásvar shuni.*

Váma means a woman, but this Kalábao, the plantain tree, is located on the right side. Were she the wife of Gańesha, how could she be on his right? She would certainly be on the left. But since other gods and goddesses are on the left, where is there room for her? So it is not true that she is the wife of Gańesha, or the daughter-in-law of Durgá. In fact, the name of Gańesha's wife is Tulasii.

According to some Puranas, Śaśthii is Gańesha's wife, while according to other Puranas, Śaśthii is the name of Kárttika's wife.

Now let us return to Gañesha. Gañesha was the group leader of prehistoric days. Some time after Post-Shiva Tantra, in the Puranic Age, a special cult, the Gañapati Cult, arose centring around Gañapati. You should remember that some five cults arose following the Puranic doctrine that had its origin some 1300 or 1400 years back: Shaevácára, Sháktácára, Vaeśnavácára, Gánapatyácára and Saorácára.

Let us throw some light on Shaevácára [the Shiva Cult]. The main goal of human beings is Shivasamádhi [final enlightenment]. Human beings should direct all their outer expressions of life towards the inner world, and finally merge in Paramátmá [Supreme Soul]. This is the sum and substance of the Shiva Cult.

*Yacched váunmanasi prájñastad yacched jñānamátmani;
Jñānamátmani mahati niyacched tad yacchecchāntátmani.*

This shāntátma [referred to in tad yacchecchāntátmani of the shloka] means Shivátmá [Supreme Entity]; one who merges in the Supreme Entity attains Shivasamádhi, which is the goal of every spiritual aspirant.

Next is Sháktácára [the Shakti Cult]. According to Sháktácára, the static principle contained in támasikii shakti has to be merged in Bhavánii shakti, or Káliká shakti (the acoustic root for Káliká shakti is sám). And then the mutative principle has to be withdrawn from Káliká shakti and merged in Bhaeravii shakti (the acoustic root of Bhaeravii shakti is shań).

Bhaeravii shakti means energy in action. All people want to come into contact with the mutative force. The acoustic root of energy is rań and that for the mutative principle is shań. People want energy supported by the mutative force so that they might enjoy name and fame. So they crave for sha + ra = shra (in the feminine gender, shrii, beauty). Thus there was a custom in olden days for people to prefix their names with the word shrii. The old custom has fallen into some disuse: shrii is used less nowadays. But I hope that these days people will not become vishrii [ugly]! Then the sentient forces [or principles] have to be withdrawn from Bhaeravii shakti, and merged in Kaosikii shakti, or Mahásarasvatii, the spiritual effulgence.

These are the successive phases of the Puranic Shakti Cult. This cult begins with Káliká shakti, but Káliká is not Kálii, the wife of Shiva, nor the Káliká Shakti of Buddhist Tantra or Post-Shiva Tantra, nor Káliká the Puranic goddess. Rather, this Káliká is a philosophical term, the inner spirit of a system of sádhaná.

Next is Vaeśnavácára [the Viśnú Cult].

*Viśtárah sarvabhútasya Viśńorvishvamidań jagat;
Draśtavyamátmavattasmádabhedena vicakśańaeh.*

Viśnúpuráńa –Trans.

Viśnú pervades each and every thing of this universe, and because He is all-pervading, He is called “Viśnú”. And the inner spirit of Vaeśnavácára is to realize this all-pervading Viśnú.

*Viśńuparistitah Viśńuh Viśńuh khádati Viśńave;
Katham hasasi re Viśńuh sarvań Viśńumayań jagat.*

A devout Vaishnavite is seeing Viśnú in everything. Then he sits down to eat rice from a plate. He has a dog on his lap who partakes of food from the same plate. Another scholar who happens to discover that the Vaishnavite gentleman and his dog are eating from the same plate bursts into laughter. He asks how a devout Vaishnavite can eat food from the same plate as a dog. The Vaishnavite replies, “Viśnú in the form of a dog is sitting on the lap of a man, another manifestation of the same Viśnú. Viśnú the man and Viśnú the dog are eating rice, another manifestation of Viśnú. And why are you, another manifestation of Viśnú, laughing? Everything in this universe is Viśnú.” This is the Puranic Viśnú Cult.

The fourth is Gánapatyácára [the Gañesha, or Gañapati, Cult]. When the ancient custom of group leadership – gańapativáda, vináyakaváda or gańeshaváda – became converted into a cult during the Puranic Age, the idea was adopted that the group leader was the leader of the universe. “The Supreme Entity is the leader of our group. We will try to satisfy Parama Puruśa.” With this sort of outlook, the Gánapatya Cult evolved during the Puranic Age. They are worshippers of gańapati, the group leader. This is the Gañapati Cult.

Last is the Saora [Sun] Cult. This cult was propagated by the Brahmans who came from Shákadviipa. Shákadviipa was the southern part of Russia, with its capital at Tashkent. The original Greek

name of this area was Sacdonia. These Brahmans who migrated to India from Sacdonia did not recognize the Vedas or anything else; they were astrologers and teachers of áyurveda. Since they cultivated the science of astrology and astronomy, they used to worship the sun-god, Súra. The word saora is derived from súra plus the suffix śra, giving the sense of "offspring"; saora means "one who is the worshipper of the sun-god". When it developed into a full-fledged cult, the idea behind it was that the sun-god, who was the creator of this world, was also the creator of the solar system; that is, all the planets – earth, Mars, Mercury, etc. – have come from the sun. The sun is their father. Similarly, the father of this universe is the sun-like Parama Purúṣa; so the sun is worshipped as the Supreme Progenitor of this universe. This is the inner essence of the Súra Cult, which was spread by the Sacdonian Brahmans. But it was not well accepted anywhere in India; it was only accepted to a moderate extent in some places.

These were the five main cults of the Puranic Age. None of them became widely established. Some enjoyed a limited popularity, while some barely existed at all. Some have a philosophical basis, while others do not.

I told you previously about Gauṇḡá. Párvatī had a son, Bhaerava. He used to practise Tantra, and was a favourite of Shiva. Kálī had a daughter Bhaeravī. She also used to practise Tantra and was also a favourite of Shiva. But Gauṇḡá's son, Kárttika, was very extroverted in outlook. He was more fascinated with the external world, with less interest in the subjective world. This did not please Gauṇḡá. So in order to remove Gauṇḡá's sorrow, Shiva was very affectionate towards her, and for that reason, people used to say jokingly that Shiva was dancing with Gauṇḡá on His head.⁽⁶⁾ The fact was different, as I have explained.

Then later on, during the days of the Puranic Shakti Cult and the Shiva Cult, this incident was symbolized by tying Gauṇḡá to Shiva's matted locks of hair, and from Gauṇḡá's mouth, the flow of the River Gauṇḡá, or Ganges, originated. This was merely the imagination of the authors of the Puranas.

It has been said, Shaṅkaramaolinivāsini vimale, and Haripadapadmavīhārīni Gaunge, himavidhumuktádhavalatrūṇe – "The flow of the Ganges is the water which washed the feet of Nárāyaṇa in heaven, and this water ultimately flowed into Shiva's matted locks. Then, piercing through the snow-white moon, it spread in all directions in a bright cascade." Shaṅkaramaolinivāsini vimale – "The clear water that dwells in Shiva's matted locks". This means the water of the Ganges.

In any case, this is all the imagination of the authors of the Puranas.

Now, the story goes that this son of Gauṇḡá was Kárttika, and as I have said earlier, Kárttika was of extroverted nature.

The author of the Purana has said something more about Kárttika which does not seem to be reasonable: he imagined that Kárttika was the son of the River Gauṇḡá, or Ganges. Now the question is, how can a river be the mother of a human baby? Common sense does not accept this view, but the Puranas clearly state that Kárttika was the son of the River Ganges, and that while floating in the current, he got stuck on a sandbar. In that situation, the boy started crying bitterly, and the six stars in the sky took pity on the crying child. As the boy sucked the breast milk of these six stars, he was called Śaḍánana [Having Six Faces], or Murugam, or Balasubrahmanyam or Kárttikeyam. According to the Purana, since the boy sucked the breast milk of the star Krttiká with his principal face, the boy was named Kárttika. Krttiká is one of the twelve stars after which the months of the Bengali calendar are named.

Though a little off the subject, let us mention that the name of the star is Krttiká, with double "t". Krttiká + sna = Kárttika, so in the spelling of Kárttika, there should be two "ta's". According to the rules of Sanskrit grammar, the consonant after r may be double; that is, r may be followed by one consonant or two consonants. For instance, in the spelling of dharma and karma, one is at liberty to use either one "m" or two "m's". But in the spelling of Kárttika, two "ta's" must be there, because the original word was Krttiká, not Krtiká. Had the mother's name been Krtiká, then one "t" would have been permissible. There are some words like Kárttika, Varttika, where there is a double "t".

So regarding Kárttika, we find that he is Shiva's son, no doubt, but not the son of Párvatī nor of Durgá. He is definitely the son of Gauṇḡá, another wife of Shiva; but he is not the son of the River Gauṇḡá. And in this human frame he can by no means have six faces; he can have only one face.

There is a popular belief that Kárttika was a bachelor. In the folk-songs current in the districts of Hooghly, 24 Parganas, etc., Kárttika is referred to as unmarried. This is wrong. According to some Puranas, his wife's name is Śaśthī, but according to other Puranas, his wife's name is Devasená. (In ancient times the ladies had names like Vasantasená, Sharatsená, Devasená, etc. So in that sense, Kárttika was "Devasenapati", that is, the "Husband of Devasená". People wrongly interpret

“Devasenápati” to mean “the Commander-in-Chief of the Devas”.⁽⁷⁾ But actually, it means that Kárttika was the husband of Devasená.) So this proves that Kárttika was not a bachelor.

These are all stories of the Puranas. In our younger days, we would recite,

*Kárttik thákur hyámlá
Ekbár áse mār saunge
Ekbár áse eklá.*

[Ill-bred Kárttika Thakur
Once comes with his mother, Durgá
Once comes alone.]

But this was wrong, for Kárttika’s mother was not Durgá; he was the son of Gauṅgá. So by now you are fairly well-acquainted with the details of Shiva’s family.

According to different Puranas and other anecdotes, Kárttika was a man of extroversive nature. That is why the author of the Puranas selected the most beautiful bird, the peacock, as his mount; there is no other mount: there is no other reason behind this selection. That is all about Kárttika.

Of all the gods and goddesses who are claimed to be related to Shiva, we have found that Durgá was not Shiva’s wife, and the concept of Durgá came five thousand years after Shiva. Neither Lakśmī nor Sarasvatī is the daughter of Shiva. Gaṇesha is much more ancient than Shiva because the custom of worship of the group leader is a very ancient one. Kárttika is Shiva’s son, no doubt, but he is the son neither of Párvatī nor of Durgá, but of Gauṅgá. And we have also discussed their mounts in a fairly detailed way.

An attempt was made in the past and is being made in the present to relate these gods and goddesses to Shiva. The only reason for this is the unrivaled and unparalleled influence of Shiva on the minds of the masses. Those gods and goddesses who are said to be related to Shiva acquire some prestige, because all bask in the glory of Shiva.

30 May 1982, Calcutta

Footnotes

- (1) Gaṇesha is considered mythologically to be the son of Shiva. –Trans.
- (2) The Aryans did not worship Gaṇesha. –Trans.
- (3) Kadalī – plantain or banana; kacu – arum, *Colocasia antiquorum* Schott.; haridrā – turmeric; jayantī – *Sesbania aegyptiaca* Pers.; ashoka – *Saraca indica* Linn.; bilva – bel, wood-apple; dadimba – pomegranate; mán – *Alocasia indica* Schott.; dhānya – paddy, unhusked rice. –Trans.
- (4) Flour made from roasted gram (also called chick-pea or garbanzo) or sometimes roasted wheat or corn. –Trans.
- (5) Nava means “nine”, hence, “nine Durgás” and “nine plants”. –Trans.
- (6) “To dance with someone on the head” meant to dote on someone. –Trans.
- (7) Senápati means “commander-in-chief.” –Trans.

Shiva's Teachings – 1 (Discourse 9)

SHIVOKTI 1

Shiva was the loving guide for all living beings in their journey through life, in all the aspirations of their hearts, in all their creations. In His benevolent judgment, in His loving eyes, nobody was negligible, nobody was abominable. All had special value in their respective structures. All were indispensable parts of the relativity of time, space and person.

Those who come in the flow of creation are vibrated by the vast Cosmic Mind to move along their path. Emerging from the seed of creation, and merging in the limitlessness of infinity – having made themselves significant for eternity – they depart.

Their coming and going is not an absolute truth, nor does it lead to supreme fulfilment. They are footballs in the eternal game of Parama Puruṣa, and their immeasurable value lies in their being His

playthings. Everything is coming from the world beyond the scope of knowledge, and everything is going back to the world beyond the scope of knowledge, and the transitory state of knowability is the present. The past is beyond reach; only the present is within the scope of measurement by the time factor.

Mobility means movement from one point of time to another point of time. Judged in this light, the past is decidedly a relative truth. And the future is also certainly a relative truth. But what is the present?

The present is too brief to be subdivided into fractions of any significance or permanence. That portion of the past which people can associate with the future according to their understanding, we call "the present". In the absence of correct understanding about the fragmentary nature of time, some philosophers ignore this world and the present and paint a rainbow image of the future, and make people rush toward that mirage of the rainbow, forgetting the present. They do not deeply consider how little is the existential significance of a rainbow!

Historians often give more importance to the human aspect of history than to its application in the present. As a result, the past is detached from the present. While such historians glorify the past, they completely neglect the present. And if history is detached from the present, people cannot realize its significance and value. Consequently human life becomes one-sided.

There are some people who are inclined to accept this ever-changing present as absolute and supreme. Considering insensate and inert matter to be the original source of all and the most important factor of existence, they thereby block the path of human wisdom. These materialists lose their natural human values; they think, "This material enjoyment is the absolute and supreme fulfilment."

In His thoughts and ideas, actions and expressions, Shiva did not give indulgence to any of these three defects⁽¹⁾ regarding past, present and future. He said, "You are living in the present. Utilize your past in building your present. Plan for the future in such a way that all human wealth is consolidated and radiates tremendous energy." Shiva has instructed in clear language: Varttamāneśu vartteta ["Live in the present"].

SHIVOKTI 2

Karmaṇa baddhate jīvaḥ vidyayā tu pramucyate ["People bound by karma⁽²⁾ are liberated by self-knowledge"]. When people work without applying knowledge, they become entrapped in the bondages of action and finally end up in a state of crudity. When someone is working continuously like a machine, without any support of intellect, it should be understood that that mechanical action is the expression of a crude force. You may hear some people say, "Keep working, keep working." Surely you will work, but you must not work without intellect. When a machine works, there is an intellectual entity controlling its operations. If a machine is permitted to work without any control, it is bound to cause catastrophe. So it has been said, Vidyayā tu pramucyate ["Knowledge leads to liberation"]. I have said in my book *The Liberation of Intellect: Neohumanism*:⁽³⁾ read as much as you can, cultivate the faculty of knowledge, and accept only those things which are worthy of acceptance after rational thinking. The mind discharges two main functions – thinking and recollecting. People generally do not – and do not want to – utilize these mental faculties.

Perception, inference and authority are the valid sources of knowledge. People generally ignore inference; they are chiefly concerned with perception and authority. As they do not cultivate much the habit of thinking and recollecting, oftentimes they tend to give more weight to authority than to perception. Often they reject perception irrationally under the pressure of authority.

I would not say, nor will anyone say, that perception is altogether free from defects. Nonetheless it is generally recognized as a valid source of knowledge, but people often disregard its value under the pressure of authority.

For example, some say that the moon was split by the incantation of mantras. Others say that someone put black spots on the moon. Others say that an old woman is sitting on the moon spinning yarn – that is why the moon has black spots. Still others say that the black spots are there because a hare is sitting on the moon's lap – and so one name of the moon is *Shashāṅka*.⁽⁴⁾ Those who accept these stories as authoritative and propagate these ideas, disregard even their own eyes. And thus finally they end up becoming the slaves of dogma. Those slaves of dogma, sometimes knowingly, sometimes unknowingly, submerge themselves in the mire of falsehood. They create obstacles to the spread of knowledge, and may even destroy the spirit of inquiry in others.

The influence of so-called authority exercises a greater spell on those who are averse to study, those who are disinclined to increase their rationalistic outlook, and those who have put a seal on their innate faculties of thinking and recollection. It is true that authority has to be accepted, as I have already

said, but nothing in this world of relativity should be given undue importance or accepted as revelation or as unalterable, unquestionable truth.

Moreover, there is a still-greater defect in authority as a source of information. Apart from defects due to ignorance and defects due to changes in time, the person who is accepted as the source of authority may indeed be motivated by sub-human propensities. For instance, there may be dishonest persons who have exercised a tremendous influence over a particular community which has accepted them as authorities. In that event, such dishonest persons may do enormous harm to that community by imposing their capricious and defective mentality and other harmful tendencies on them. They may trample and crush those innocent, credulous people and fling them into the darkest dungeons.

By glorifying an irrational doctrine which has been created by personal caprice, like a red balloon of imagination flying in the sky, and then imposing that doctrine on millions of people, they destroy the universal values of human beings. By declaring inert and insensate matter – which is actually the slave of humanity – to be the supreme and absolute goal of worship, they cause the decay of all human treasure and spiritual wealth, and thus throw individuals and collectivity into an eternal whirlpool of lamentation.

Regarding the rather foolish proponents and followers of these doctrines, Shiva warned that they not only lead the people to ruin in the mundane sphere and cast them into the darkness of frustration in the spiritual sphere, in the psychic sphere also they inject severe mental diseases – and thus fill the entire existence of humanity with anguished suffering. On the path before humanity stretches a murky fog, as dreadful as death. Shiva has strongly denounced them saying, “They are lokavyámohakarakáh” [“Their only work is to inject disease into human life”].

SHIVOKTI 3

Just as the living world is divided into two categories – those who live in groups and those who live alone – similarly regarding family life, all creatures are divided into two broad classes: creatures with family ties (for example, elephants, lions and pigeons) and those without any family ties (for instance, tigers, dogs, cats, goats, etc.).

At the beginning of evolution, humans used to lead libertine lives without any consideration for family obligations, but they gradually developed a family instinct. However, that family instinct was no different from that of the elephants, lions, pigeons, etc. Due to this inborn instinct, males and females arrived at a loose but workable compromise regarding family life. But in that there was no sense of responsibility born out of a developed conscience; rather, due to their loose relationships with each other, one person used to desert another and go anywhere he or she liked. The number of such libertines was very high, and they used to disturb the peace and harmony of the so-called family members and become the cause of many serious quarrels.

The male libertines would not take responsibility for their offspring. They used to wander freely, and as a result, the entire responsibility for raising the children in their infancy would devolve on the mothers. But it was not possible for the mothers alone to bear the responsibility of maintaining the children, as a result of which many children died in early infancy. Those who survived felt themselves to be in a sea of troubles after they were weaned from their mother’s breast milk. Then they would be deprived of their mother’s love, since she had to take care of the next baby. Those were the days of the prehistoric humans. One should remember that even in those prehistoric days, some portion of the Vedas was composed, chiefly by the so-called family people. The life of the libertines was just like that of the animals.

Everything in this universe is moving. Scene after scene is changing, and those scenes of the remote past are gradually receding from people’s minds. The people of the present-day world have now forgotten those ancient libertines... they have also forgotten those so-called family people who in reality barely tolerated any family tie. And the great personality on account of whose solitary contribution these things have faded into the past is Shiva, Shiva the Omniscient, Shiva Táraka Brahma. He noticed that human beings were endowed with sharp intellect and creative potential. So why should they remain in this condition? Why should they neglect their future descendants and abandon them to a life of degradation forever? Why should they not offer them a glorious ideology shining with purity and virtue? Shiva further declared that those who wanted to shoulder a greater responsibility out of the dictates of a noble and great ideology, and found it impossible to accept the bondages of family life, should remain single. But those persons must not be libertine; they should be celibate. Others would have to become disciplined family people by fully accepting their responsibilities; they could not be family people without accepting family commitments. Shiva made the rule that regardless of whether women were capable or incapable of earning a livelihood, men would have to take on the responsibility of supporting them; thus

the Sanskrit word for "husband" is bhartṭā. The word bhartṭā is derived from the root verb bhr + suffix trī; the root bhr means "to support" and bhartṭā (in the first case-ending) means "one who supports someone".

As a result of this arrangement, it became easier for the women to maintain the children, since they were relieved of the onerous responsibility of providing their food and clothing. Not only that, when the children became a bit older the direct responsibility for their maintenance shifted from the mother to the father.

It was not easy to know the fathers of children even in the case of the so-called householders, far less in that of the libertines. Children would know only their mothers. And after they were weaned, they would forget their mothers also. Thus being deprived of motherly love and affection at a very early age, they had no opportunity to develop the sweeter and finer sensibilities of the human mind. The human mind, the human intellect, was nipped in the bud; those people had no opportunity to blossom, to gladden the heart of the world with their sweet joy. By declaring the males to be bhartṭā [husbands] Shiva fulfilled a major portion of His task for human society.

But Shiva did more than that: He declared that women must be kalatra, which means that women must discharge their obligations to their husbands and their children in such a way that the latter will not have the least difficulty.

Those who accepted this new arrangement were declared married, and the other members of their society would be witnesses to the marriage ceremony, to bless the newly-married couple and pledge their cooperation to them. The Sanskrit equivalent for marriage is vivāha (vi – vah + ghaiṇ): it means, after the ceremony, the man and woman can no longer live as libertines or as irresponsible so-called family people. They have to discharge their full obligations as bhartṭā and kalatra, responsible husband and responsible wife.

Another Sanskrit equivalent for "woman" is nārī, which is feminine gender. But Shiva used the term kalatra, in the neuter; for to her husband a woman is a wife, but to her children and other members of the society, she is as dignified as her male counterpart. So by declaring a married lady to be kalatra, Shiva gave her special status, and addressed her in neuter terms.

The liberal meaning of the term vivāha is "live one's life in a new way with a special type of responsibility". This is the underlying significance of the Shaiva system of marriage.

In His life, Shiva Himself married with this commitment. We can say without the least hesitation that Shiva was the first person in this world to marry in the proper sense of the term. He was eager to see that the married women did their duties properly towards their husbands, that is, that they always took care to remove the difficulties of their husbands.

Thus it was His strict instruction, Yad bharttureva hitamicchati tad kalatram ["If in the mind of the wife, there is the sincere desire for the welfare of her husband, the family will be blissful and a thatched house will become a golden home"].

SHIVOKTI 4

It is said, Pratikulavedaniyam dukkham ["The mental experience of coming into contact with antipathetic waves is dukkham, pain"]. Living beings, particularly human beings, form their individual saṁskāras [mental reactive momenta] depending on the environment in which they freely let their minds flow, whether or not they initially like that environment. Habit turns into nature, and at that stage even unpleasant feelings may change into congenial ones. If you hurt someone's inner feelings arising from his or her innate tendencies, that is, if you inflict a blow on a person, then the reaction that is emitted from those wounded feelings is known as anger. (The Sanskrit equivalent of "anger" is krodha. Krodh + al = krodha. Some people mistakenly use the suffix ghaiṇ instead of al.)

When this anger creates its own vibrations in the mind, it exerts a tremendous influence on the nerve cells in a very short time, and causes disarray in the thinking process. The restlessness of the nerve cells causes a violent vibrational agitation in the nerve fibres, and as a result, the whole body starts trembling; the flow of blood to some parts of the body increases, and the functioning of the heart is disturbed. There is a tremendous deterioration of health. Such a person is easily defeated in any fight. Anger leads to premature death.

This is not all. During anger the power of one's thinking is impaired. Even long after the anger subsides, this state continues, and the constant brooding of the mind disturbs one's spiritual sādhanā.

So we see that the vritti [propensity] of anger harms the body and stuns the mind and creates obstacles for spiritual progress. Shiva, the great yogi, was well aware of this truth, and thus He clearly stated, *Krodha eva mahán shatruh* ["Anger is a great enemy"].

6 June 1982, Patna

Footnotes

- (1) That is, the defects of the philosophers, historians and materialists. –Trans.
- (2) Action or work, which, if done with the idea that the finite self is doing the action, will necessitate reaction. –Trans.
- (3) Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, *The Liberation of Intellect: Neohumanism*, 1982. –Trans.
- (4) Shasha means "hare" and aṅka means "lap". –Trans.

Shivas Teachings – 1 (continued) (Discourse 10)

SHIVOKTI 5

People want to assimilate various entities of the physical world, psychic world and spiritual world. This desire for assimilation is sometimes conscious, sometimes unconscious.

When they want to assimilate in the spiritual realm, in the very process of assimilation they lose their individual selves by merging in the very same Entity which they wanted to assimilate. We can compare it to a river running swiftly towards the ocean, anxious to gain something from the vastness of that ocean. Ultimately the river attains the ocean as its own, and in this very process of attainment, all its wants and desires reach their final fulfilment. On merging, the river becomes the ocean itself.

When the mind wants to assimilate something of the intellectual world, it remains engrossed in an unusual state. Though not completely forgetful of the practical world, people in this state remain somewhat oblivious to it. This is the reason great scholars become somewhat removed from practicality: their existential awareness soars into the realm of intellectuality. Though they are not completely forgetful of hard realities, they tend to ignore them – they prefer to remain in oblivion. They may or may not be able to forget, but they want to forget. And in their conscious endeavour to remain oblivious to reality, they do somehow succeed in forgetting it temporarily.

*Bhule tháká
Se to nay bholá
Vismrtir marme basi'
Rakte mor diyecho ye dolá.*

[Remaining in oblivion
Is not to forget completely.
Sitting in the heart of oblivion,
You have stirred my blood.]

It often happens that whatever one assimilates, one considers to be one's own achievement, and the ego becomes inflated like a croaking frog. Just as a frog considers itself to be bigger than others – just as the frog, in its vanity, to demonstrate its size, tries to inflate itself more and more until it bursts – so those who have assimilated only a little of the psychic world become puffed up with vanity and thereby invite their own ruin.

When the tendency towards acquisition in the physical world is extremely strong, people's tendency to assimilate spiritual or intellectual things is usually noticeably weaker. In that condition, their thirst for the material world becomes very intense. "We will distribute the wealth of the world equally among all people' or 'Let all work according to their capacity and receive according to their necessity' – I will support this principle." Philosophies such as this ultimately encourage hostility between people: they disturb not only the collective peace, but also individual peace. Separated by the iron walls of suspicion, people cannot trust each other. The present-day materialism has brought humanity to this predicament. Its consequences are dreadful.

The irrational thirst for acquisition of material things is termed "greed"; whereas the endeavour to assimilate things in the spiritual world is harmless and blameless. And the attempt to assimilate

something in the psychic world, if it is directed towards the welfare of humanity, is also harmless. Otherwise, it pollutes the minds of people and makes them intolerant: it leads to conflicts between dogmas and theories and degrades people to the level of animality.

In the past, the world has witnessed many struggles between dogmas, which have caused much bloodshed; this was a regular occurrence in the Medieval Age. And in the present day also, we witness clashes between one theory and another, which cause no less bloodshed; rather the bloodshed is greater than before. The degree of intolerance has increased immeasurably. People have lost faith in their fellow human beings; one state has lost faith in other states. In all spheres of life these days, people think one thing, say another thing, and do something entirely different. That is, hypocrisy is now at its peak.

Now the question is: What is the motivation behind this? It is the tendency to assimilate ideas without the spirit of welfare – and, still more than this, the tendency to acquire the objects of material enjoyment in ever-increasing quantities.

So whether in the material world or in the intellectual world, the predominant tendency that makes today's people, both individually and collectively, rush headlong without control, is the instinct of greed. The propensity of greed, if not controlled by rationality, or benevolent intellect, or spiritual practices, will lead to premature death. Nothing can save human beings from this. This instinct of greed has brought the present humanity to such a state that people no longer consider anything as sinful. Rather, they consider the "sin psychology" as a mental weakness, and the worst of sins are being glorified as the height of intellect, not only indirectly, but also openly.

The omniscient Shiva observed the rampant expansion of materialism and its dangerous consequences and clearly stated, *Lobhah pápasya hetubhútaḥ* ["Greed is the root cause of all sins"].

SHIVOKTI 6

Habitual exhibitionism is one of the mental diseases of humanity. The root cause of this disease is the psychology of inflating one's personality so that others are confounded, stupefied and overawed – they become speechless and gape with wonder at that inflated personality. Leave aside the person who has some merit, some capacity – even those without the least wealth, from whom you cannot expect a single penny even if you do seven hundred sit-ups and push-ups before them – even such people seek to exhibit themselves like fools or pandits. They never even care to know whether anyone has detected them or not, or whether others are actually laughing at them behind their backs: they remain totally obsessed with themselves. They even tend to forget that the Operative Principle, which is responsible for all actions, big or small, benevolent or malevolent, is absolutely dependent on the witness-ship of the Cognitive Principle. Those who have meagre intelligence may not be able to grasp this philosophical idea, but those who claim to have some intelligence, although they understand it, want to forget it. And behind this, the same psychology predominates – the psychology of exhibitionism, the psychology of self-display.

There is a story for children about a certain king who had an iron safe where he kept his gold coins. These coins, because of long disuse, became mouldy. One day the king spread the gold coins in the sun to dry, and a frog picked up one of the smallest pieces. At this its belly puffed up and its throat swelled up, and it began to announce in its characteristic rasping voice,

Rājār ghare ye dhan áche
Amār ghareo se dhan áche

[Why shouldn't I sing – I'm as rich as a king!]

At this, everyone came and asked the frog, "Well, sir, what wealth do you actually have?" Then the frog spun that little coin around at least seven hundred times, saying, "Am I less than the king?" This is an example of the psychology of exhibitionism.

No object can exist without its subjective counterpart. Those who forget this philosophical truth, and consider only the objective aspect, suffer from the worst mental disease.

Drkdarshanashaktyorekátmatevásmítá ["When people at the height of their foolishness forget the distinction between the subjective and objective counterparts, or confuse one with the other and say completely nonsensical things, that mental defect is known as *asmitá*"]. As *asmitá* is devoid of any discrimination, people with this mental defect lose their power of discrimination. First, they think that since they are so great, there is no need for them to learn anything from others. As a result of this, their further progress comes to a halt. Secondly, the arrogant attitude of this *asmitá* banishes from their minds the humble psychology of the learner. They lose interest in learning anything useful; so not only in the

world of knowledge, but also in the world of practicality, they become misfits in life because of their mountainous accumulated ignorance.

It is not that arrogance of this sort simply obstructs their progress. The human mind, like the human body, is dynamic. No one has come to remain here; everyone is moving – for movement is a must. Now, the mind whose further progress is blocked will also have to move this way or that; so when one must move, but the path of progress is blocked, one is compelled to move along the path of degradation. Thus the arrogance born of this *asmitá* will lead people towards their downfall. This arrogance, which makes them want to display themselves, forgetting all other things, is termed *ahamkára* [vanity]. The predominant *vr̥tti* behind it is *aham* [ego]: “I am everything, there is nothing beyond and outside me.”

Shiva has cautioned people to remain scrupulously aloof from this dangerous disease of vanity by saying, *Ahamkáraḥ patanasya múlam* [“Pride goeth before a fall”].

SHIVOKTI 7

That which brings about a relative change of place is called an action. This change of place occurs in the physical world and its impact is felt a great deal; but it occurs more often, and its impact is felt still more strongly, in the mental world. There is no change of place in the spiritual sphere; the spiritual momentum is felt so intensely that the continued awareness of a blissful entity saturates one’s entire existence, and fills one’s life with sweetness.

Action in the spiritual sphere is a real *yága* (*yaj* + *ghaiṇ*), that is, action which involves a constant effort. “I don’t care about any material or worldly bondage; I will keep moving towards success, crushing the pebbles of obstacles and hindrances beneath my feet. I won’t admit any mental confusion; I will move like a meteor towards supreme fulfilment, crushing and rending asunder all negative thoughts in me. If an obstacle becomes as high as the mighty Himalayas, I will laughingly shatter that also; and the small hillocks I will stride easily across. And in the spiritual sphere, I will jump over the philosophical defects in the form of dogmas that are scattered here and there like holes in the ground, and become one with the Supreme Divinity.”

The fight against obstacles in the material world is *jáda sádhaná*, or the fight for material progress. The fight against obstacles in the intellectual world is *bháva sádhaná*, the fight for intellectual progress. And in the fight against the obstacles in the spiritual realm, *sádhaná* and the goal of *sádhaná* become one. That is why *jñānīs*, intelligent people, say, “*Bhakti* [devotion] is both the means and the end.”

When people do *sádhaná* in the spiritual sphere, that *sádhaná* is called *abhidhyána* in the special sense and *parishrama* [well-directed effort] in the general sense. When people do *sádhaná* in the intellectual sphere, that is called *dháraṇá* in the special sense and *parishrama* in the general sense. When people do *jáda sádhaná* in the material sphere, it is called *shrama* in the special sense and *parishrama* in the general sense. *Abhidhyána*, *dháraṇá*, *shrama* and *parishrama* are the factors that make existence meaningful. The combined name of all these factors is “*yoga*”, which, in a nutshell, is the technique of work.

During the days of Shiva, *prapattiváda*⁽¹⁾ was not known to the people. *Prapattiváda* is akin to Sufism and the inner essence of the *Viśṇu* Cult. Here I do not propose to deal with *Prapattiváda* in detail. But *shrama*, *dháraṇá* and *abhidhyána* have the greatest value as the means for the highest expression of human activity.

If someone gazes at a tree and thinks that a ripe mango will automatically drop into his mouth, and the skin will automatically peel off, and the seed will also automatically eject itself from his mouth, his desire may be fulfilled; but judged in the perspective of eternity this fulfilment will be possible only in the theoretical world, not in the practical world. In the practical world, one will have to take the trouble to climb the tree, pick the fruit, peel off the skin, and remove the seed as he eats the mango.

“I will certainly achieve intellectual development” – if, thus thinking, I remain sitting for eternity, maybe in some distant future that intellectual development will take place. But if, instead of doing that, I follow a practical path of intellectual development, will that not be wiser?

“*Parama Puruṣa* is my most beloved. He is the darling of my eyes. I want to realize Him, I want to attain Him with all my being.” If we remain sitting idly thinking thus, *Parama Puruṣa* will remain far away. But if we run towards Him with all our spiritual longing and drench Him with our devotion in a systematic way, can supreme fulfilment be far off?

So we see that *shrama* and *parishrama* in the material world, *dháraṇá* and *parishrama* in the intellectual world and *abhidhyána* and *parishrama* in the spiritual world, are essential for all-round

fulfilment. This parishrama is the first and the last step towards the mundane success, psychic achievement, psycho-spiritual attainment and spiritual fulfilment of human beings; indeed, aversion to this parishrama is the greatest impediment to success, great or small, in human life. That is why Shiva said in clear language, Parishramena viná káryasiddhirbhavati durlabhá ["Without parishrama, success in any field of activity is impossible"].

SHIVOKTI 8

Why do people tell lies? There are two reasons, (1) personal interest (lying out of fear is included in personal interest) and (2) ingrained habit.

This universe is embedded in satya. Animals neither tell lies nor cherish untruth in their minds, plants do not cherish falsehood in their minds either. Human children do not tell lies or entertain falsehoods unless taught otherwise. Even those whom we declare to be undeveloped people do not speak or think falsehoods. Only so-called advanced people tell lies, out of personal interest or ingrained habit. But those who are committed to dharma are definitely lovers of satya, like the so-called undeveloped people. And they are much more than that also.

That which is a fact, which has really taken place, we call rta. The spirit of rta can be found in the plant world. Even among simple, undeveloped people one can easily find the idea of rta as the motivating force for society. But the followers of dharma improve upon rta and utilize it in a reformed way for the welfare of the world.

When rta leads to harm, or when it carries the possibility of falsehood, in that case people improve upon rta and make it a fit instrument for promoting welfare. Rta when it leads to welfare is called satya.

Based on the strong foundation of satya stands the multi-dimensional growth and expression of dharma. Dharma cannot remain with those who do not follow satya, who do not follow rta, or who give indulgence to falsehood out of personal interest or ingrained habit. A person who tells lies out of personal interest is certainly inferior to birds and animals – even inferior to plants. And it should be understood that a person who is a habitual liar today must have deliberately practised this habit of lying for quite some time, and that his or her old practice has now become a habit.

To give up one's bad habit, one will have to struggle. To bring about an improvement in one's habits, prolonged efforts are necessary. It is said that in the physical world falsehood is the noumenal cause of all phenomenal crimes. So however much one might display one's love for dharma, however much one might be obsessed with ritualistic paraphernalia, however much one might travel to various places of pilgrimage, if one is not sufficiently wedded to satya, dharma will never remain with that person; hence, Shiva's clear observation is, Dharmah sah na yatra na satyamasti ["Where there is no satya, there is no dharma"].

SHIVOKTI 9

Whether people live up to the dictates of satya or not, the atmosphere of this universe is suffused with the very spirit of satya. Every plant and every animal is a representation of satya.

One can discern the actual age of a palm tree by reading the marks on the trunk. The tree never lies about its age for some employment advantage. In the veins of the banyan leaves the same lines are permanently visible; they never change those lines to evade taxes. Wolves never change their voices to gain an advantage in catching goats. They are all embodiments of satya; falsehood is unknown to them.

I was saying just a while ago that people resort to falsehood either out of self-interest or due to their ingrained habit. Animals and plants do not tarnish the fair name of satya and resort to falsehood either out of petty self-interest or for any greater interest. So judged from a psychological viewpoint, this proves that humans are more selfish and mean-minded than non-humans. No doubt, bricks, wood, sand, stone, etc., have no opportunity to become habitual liars, nor do plants and animals have that opportunity (however, if humans have trained them in the art of lying, that is different). In fact, even human beings have no natural opportunity to become habitual liars. Intelligent but mean-minded people create that sort of opportunity through their malevolent efforts.

It is said, Pratikúavedaniyam duhkham ["The mental experience of coming in contact with antipathetic waves is duhkham, pain"]. A habitual liar, with his or her mental vibrations adjusted to the waves of falsehood, has to adapt to the environment of the world, where satya is the guiding principle. Sand and wood, bricks and stones, plants and animals, and even the greater part of humanity, are

wedded to satya. The vibrations of their saṁskāras conform to those of satya. While, on the contrary, a liar's mental vibrations conform to falsehood.

Placed in an uncongenial environment, people experience an unpleasant feeling. So a liar is bound to feel miserable in a world sustained by satya. Shiva has therefore warned the people of the world by saying, Mithyāvādī sadā duḥkḥī ["Liars are always wretched creatures"].

SHIVOKTI 10

All created beings have a natural tendency to move along a straight path. But out of cowardice, selfishness or sinful propensities, humans and other creatures may resort to a crooked path, not only in the material world, but also in the mental world. That is, cowardliness, selfishness and sinful tendencies bring about curvatures in the world of thoughts. These curvatures breed mutual suspicion. Even innocent people are taught to think wrongly.

Sometimes people grow suspicious of innocent people and mistreat them. Those who still have some amount of benevolent intellect feel pained and ashamed when they realize that they should not have suspected those innocent people. But those who are devoid of benevolent intellect do not feel at all ashamed of their conduct. Rather they think and also say publicly that it is better to suspect others first, and then gradually remove those suspicions later. This is the main characteristic of a sinner's psychology.

Individuals or groups or communities guided by this sinner's psychology, become involved in various inhuman activities out of unjustified suspicion. Ultimately there comes a time when they no longer repent. Those doctrines and philosophies which teach people to suspect their fellow citizens, which teach people to treat their fellow humans as enemies, have done enormous harm to the world in the past, and if not restrained and controlled, will do so in the future also.

The situation may come to such a pass that detectives may be employed against every person. Again, another set of detective personnel may be employed to watch whether each detective is functioning properly or not. Thus a vicious atmosphere of intelligence and counter-intelligence will be rampant in the society. And the dangerous consequence is this – that all human treasures having been poisoned, human existence itself will become meaningless. People will grow cynical, or will be forced to leave their country or their society to escape this venomous atmosphere.

The matter does not end here. The wickedness, the deceit, that pollutes human society first moves along a crooked path like its masters, and finally ends up by annihilating its masters themselves. The wicked persons at the helm of affairs, who are now out to liquidate others, will one day themselves be liquidated and erased from history by their own followers. Sinful persons, by following the crooked path, contaminate the atmosphere of the universe, but ultimately that sinful conduct, in a similar crooked way, will recoil like a boomerang on the sinners themselves.

Those who deprive others of justice, who stifle others' voices and try to immortalize themselves by their own loud proclamations, are themselves usually deprived of justice in the end. And their loud cries which had risen to the skies, are smothered in the underworld. Shiva the Omniscient was aware of these hard realities. So He warned the devoted and dharmic people, Pāpasya kuṭilā gatiḥ ["The ways of sin are always crooked"].

13 June 1982, Patna

Footnotes

(1) Prapattivāda is the doctrine of complete surrender to the Supreme. –Trans.

Shiva's Teachings – 1 (continued) (Discourse 11)

SHIVOKTI 11

It is dharma that sustains the existences of plants, animals, humans and all living and non-living entities. So if the dharma of some entity is jeopardized, it should be understood that the very existence of that entity is in jeopardy. That is why wise, creative and thoughtful people become seriously concerned when they notice that something has lost its innate property or dharma. In fact, the presiding deity in a living being is dharma. Dhryate dharma ityāhuh sa eva paramaṁ prabhuh ["That which upholds an entity, which is its motivating force, is dharma"]. Scientists first become acquainted with the dharma, or properties, of various substances, and then begin their research to discover newer and newer

information about those substances, then they propagate their various theories and formulate new plans of invention.

Trees and plants, wood, bricks and stones, animals and humans – all are great in their respective spheres of dharma. Here dharma does not mean any particular religion; it means the quintessence of one's very existence. As human beings have come in human form, they will have to live and grow, they will have to establish themselves in human life and die a glorious death, for this is their human dharma. They can not afford simply out of the instincts of self-preservation and reproduction, to degrade themselves to the level of non-human beings.

The very essence of mánava dharma [human dharma], lies in three factors, plus a fourth factor which is the resultant of the first three: (1) vistára, the principle of expansion; (2) rasa, the principle of total surrender to Parama Puruśa; (3) sevá, selfless service to Parama Puruśa and His creation; and (4) tadstithi, the final ensconcement in Parama Puruśa.

Human beings want expansion, but this is not possible by depriving others of their wealth. It is possible only by drenching one's human values and existential awareness in a flow of sweetness and expanding them throughout the universe – by infusing the sweetest feelings of the innermost recesses of one's heart into the heart of each and every entity.

Rasa means to be saturated with ever-blissful awareness – to enliven human existence with sweet freshness. This becomes possible only when one maintains a constant link with the Supreme Entity from whom one's individual existence has emerged.

This world of ours is a world of give and take. And in the process of give and take, the human mind neither progresses nor regresses. If one thinks only of receiving, the mind degenerates; again, if one thinks only of giving, at a certain stage one may develop indifference to one's very existence. Thus people will have to transcend this level of give and take: they will have to consider themselves as instruments of the Supreme Entity, and throw themselves unreservedly into the work desired by Him. This is the underlying spirit of sevá.

So vistára, rasa and sevá – these three come within the scope of sádhaná, and the goal of this sádhaná is the fourth factor, the resultant of all these three.

Mánava dharma is the combination of all the four factors. This dharma is the greatest friend of human beings. One can sacrifice anything for the sake of this dharma; for this dharma, no hardship is too great. Therefore, this dharma is called Bhágavata Dharma.⁽¹⁾

Shiva's observation is, Dharma rakśati rakśitah – "One who protects dharma is protected by dharma." Dharma saves the dhármika [the upholder of dharma] in the material sphere, in the subtle sphere and in the causal sphere. When dharma saves people in the material sphere, they experience it before their very eyes, they hear it with their ears, they feel it with the tenderness of touch. When dharma helps them in the causal sphere, they experience it by loving Parama Puruśa with all the sweetness of their hearts. This feeling has no external expression. When dharma saves people in the subtle sphere, they experience it through deep reflection.

The dynamicity of dharma functions mainly in the subtle sphere. With the increasing development of the power of reflection, dharmic people realize that dharma is always with them in a very subtle way. They further realize that their dharma and their beloved Parama Puruśa are one and inseparable. So Shiva clearly observed, Dharmasya súkśmá gatih ["The ways of dharma are very subtle"].

SHIVOKTI 12

All people in all circumstances must live according to the dictates of dharma. As I said a little earlier, the dharma of human beings is Bhágavata Dharma, and it has four stages – vistára, rasa, sevá and tadstithi. The fourth factor, the final ensconcement in Parama Puruśa, is the last stage of dharma. The first three are the three steps towards that ultimate attainment – that last stage whose movement is eternal – whose beginning, middle and end the intellect cannot fathom. Only to achieve that supreme stage, human beings have come on to this earth. This final stage of dharma may indeed be called the first stage, the last stage and also the middle stage of tadstithi; for here, the beginning, the middle and the end are all fused into one. As the great mystic of Ráíh, Pacái Shekh, once observed,

*Dayál tomár rakam bojhá bhár.
Sheśer pareo shuru áche ei bujhechi sár.*

[O my merciful Lord, it's impossible to understand your ways; Even after your end, a beginning. This is the essence of all I have learned.]

That is why it has been said that dharma must be followed under all circumstances by everyone, whatever may be one's class – shúdra, kśatriya, vaeshya or vipra.⁽²⁾ Tasmát dharmah sadá karyah sarvavaríāeh prayatnatáh. Here we notice also that one cannot attain the final state of tadsthiti by bypassing the first three stages. Someone may think that he will be able to do penance in Himalayan caves with his legs upraised and head down, neglecting the distressed people of the society. If Parama Puruśa comes and removes the heavy stone door of his cave and appears before him and asks, "What do you want, my child?" – and if he answers, "I want to be one of the stars of the Great Bear constellation," his desire will never be fulfilled. His prolonged penance in the caves will all end in nothing. This is not Bhágavata Dharma. A householder, even while faithfully performing his or her mundane duties, must sincerely follow Bhágavata Dharma and also serve suffering creatures. And the sannyásiis,⁽³⁾ while remaining outside family life, must follow Bhágavata Dharma and apply the balm of peace and progress to all the afflictions of humanity. This is the true path of dharma; this is exactly what Parama Puruśa wants.

The penance of sannyásiis or householders in mountain caves may be completely destroyed by the recurrent thoughts and memories of worldly life. While sitting in the Himalayas, they will meditate on Calcutta sweets made from date sugar. Only those sannyásiis whose minds are deeply pained at the gloomy touch of human sorrow – whose minds sparkle like rubies and emeralds with the tears of joy and laughter of all beings – find success in their vow of renunciation and in their spiritual life.

Only after crossing the first three stages can one arrive at the fourth and ultimate stage. So Shiva has said, people should follow dharma Átmamokśartham jagaddhitáya ca ["For self-realization and for the welfare of the universe"].

18 June 1982, Patna

Footnotes

(1) "The Dharma to Attain the Supreme." –Trans.

(2) That is, labourer class, warrior class, capitalist class or intellectual class. –Trans.

(3) Literally, "Those who ensconce themselves in Sat, the Unchangeable Entity"; renunciants. –Trans.

Shiva's Teachings - 2 (Discourse 11 (continued))

SHIVOPADESHA 1

*Ekaṁ jñānam nityamādyantashūnyam
Nānyat kiṁcit varttate vastusatyam;
Tayorabhedo'smin indriyopādhinā vae
Jñānasyāyam bhāsate nānyathaeva.*

[One eternal knowledge without beginning or end – there is no other supreme truth. And when the upādhi, or special power, of the indriyas, or organs, to receive or transmit inferential vibrations is suspended, and the external world and the internal world become fused into one, there remains only the knowledge of One Entity.]

The Sámkhya philosophy is the oldest philosophy. But the very name "Sámkhya"⁽¹⁾ indicates that people had been acquainted with numbers for a long time. They were also aware that the number zero is not valueless. When zero is placed on the right side of a number, the number's value increases ten times, but if it is placed on the left side of a number, the number neither increases nor decreases. After the significance of zero was realized, the decimal system was introduced.

In the psychological analysis of all the numbers, the number one has the greatest importance after zero. Normally the human mind is scattered in all directions. When the mind, with all its divergent flows, is directed consciously or unconsciously towards a particular object or idea, the goal of this directed movement is called "one" in psychological parlance. Judged in that light, "two" means two ones, "three" means three ones, etc. If, on the other hand, there is a quantity but there is no clear, specific number of ones, then we say "many". If we analyse with deep concentration, we see that all entities ultimately lead

to "One" in the process of synthetic movement. We also notice that, whether in the material sphere or in the intellectual sphere, all entities are particular temporal, spatial and personal forms of the Cognitive Faculty, but these forms of the Cognitive Faculty are created by Its own immanent powers.

These immanent powers are not actually different from the Cognitive Faculty itself. If we say "mango", it means all the component parts of the mango – the skin, the flesh, the juice, the seed, etc. Similarly, when we say "Cognitive Entity", we mean Its witness-ship, Its role as fundamental cause of the universe, Its guñas, or three immanent powers, and the operation of these powers on Itself. All the manifestations of the universe are the varied expressions of this one and supreme Cognitive Faculty. That is why at the very outset it was said, Ekaṁ jiṇānam ["One eternal knowledge"].

Anityāśhuciduhkhānātmāsu nityāśhucisukhātmakhyātiravidyā. The defective psychology by which people think temporary to be permanent, impure to be pure, sorrow to be happiness and non-spiritual to be spiritual, is called avidyā [ignorance]. And what is anitya [impermanence]? – that which does not always exist, that which is assailed by the time factor. Nitya [eternal] is just the opposite – that which is not assailed by the time factor, that which undergoes neither sampramośa,⁽²⁾ nor assailment, by the relative factors of time, place and person. As it was, it still is, and will ever remain.

In this world of mobility, that which comes, goes.

*Ei din āse ei rāt āse bhāi
Yārā āse tārā sabāi calīā yāi
Maner mukure mrdurekhā rekhe yāi.*

[The day comes, the night comes
Those who come all go away,
Leaving a soft imprint on the mirror of our minds.]

The world is a panorama of endless movement, a vast assemblage of rainbow colours. If upon seeing it, people think that they have really attained something permanent, or become intoxicated with the colours, they will make a great mistake. People are attracted to minute portions of this earth, and embracing them, seek the path of self-gratification. But long before they attain satisfaction, those minute portions, that procession of colours, vanish into nothingness, leaving them in endless frustration and lamentation like blind, headless demons. This is not a decree of God; it is the law of the universe.

As avidyā or defective psychology teaches people to look upon the transitory as permanent, people sometimes knowingly, sometimes unknowingly, run after mirages and waste their valuable lives in great frustration.

The Supreme Cognitive Principle, which is the only knowable entity for all other beings, is the sole permanent entity. To attain something permanent, one must not run after the petty pleasures of the world. Rather, knowing that eternal Entity, that permanent Entity, to be the only goal of life, one has to propel all one's mental propensities towards Him. One must not waste one's potentialities mistaking the transitory for the eternal. All created objects are finite; sitting in the midst of the multitude of finite things, and with the help of a finite unit mind, it is impossible, either in theory or in practice, to think of the Infinite. When the mind becomes intoxicated with the thought of the Infinite, then the finite mind transcends its own limits and loses itself in a state of endless peace. This is the highest attainment.

Every finite entity has a beginning and an end, a starting-point and a destination, and there must also be a middle, halfway between the beginning and the end. Anything that has a beginning must have an end, so there must be a middle also. But something having no beginning cannot have any end; the beginningless cannot be joined to the endless, so naturally there cannot be any middle either.

A point has position, but no magnitude. The starting-point has position; the terminating point has position; and the middle point also has position. But the starting-point of something which is unlimited has no position, and its terminating point also has no position; and as there is no position, there arises no question of magnitude.

When the subject [that is, the knower] of something finite becomes the subject of infinitude, it becomes objectless, devoid of sound and other guñas [qualities]. Even while sitting on the dusty earth, in the midst of the multitude of finite things, one's mind may be imprinted with the colour of the Infinite – one may become possessed by the Infinite. But with only these feelings of the heart, full realization cannot be attained. So all the sages and realized persons have said in one voice, that there is no other path to supreme fulfilment than total self-surrender to Parama Puruśa. Thus it has been said about the Supreme Cognition, ādyantashūnyam ["without beginning or end"].

Anything that is created by the collective bondages of sentient, mutative and static principles is called vastu [matter], and that which is free from these triple bondages is called avastu [non-matter]. When Parama Puruṣa, the Supreme Cognition, is devoid of any object, He is non-matter; but when He is fully associated with an object, He is matter. But what sort of matter is that Cognition?

Whether an object is manifested or unmanifested, it must have qualities. When an object has qualities, but these qualities are not manifested and do not come within the scope of the perception of created beings, that state is called sadvastu. But when an object comes within the scope of perception or conception, it is called padārtha [substance]. Human intellect can actually rise far above the range of perception, and that is why many wise persons recognize the mind as an eleventh indriya⁽³⁾ in addition to the five sensory organs and five motor organs. That is, the nature of intellect, in the process of increasing subtilization, is converting the unknown sadvastu into a known or half-known substance. Because of this process of conversion, Prakṛti can flow in both directions [that is, either towards crudity or towards subtlety]; and when substance itself is gradually transformed into the Supreme Cognition in the course of time, we say that the Prakṛtabháva [flow of Prakṛti] in that substance is in the process of gradual waning. It is for this reason that Prakṛti is called nityanivṛttá [constantly waning].

Vastusatyam⁽⁴⁾ means satyavastu. The question is, are satyavastu and sadvastu the same? This expressed world of ours includes these three factors: sadvastu-in-fact, sadvastu-in-essence and sadvastu-in-appearance. Of these, sadvastu-in-essence is beyond the scope of perception and conception. Sadvastu-in-appearance is within the scope of perception. We can convert it into substance by our intellectual analysis and scientific research. And sadvastu-in-fact, although it comes within the scope of mind, does not come within the scope of perception; though we can experience it, we cannot convert it into substance. We experience it like sadvastu-in-essence, with the subtle feelings of our hearts, but we do not experience it in the objective world. If we try to bring it within the scope of the objective world, our own existence becomes converted into the noumenal world. The final result of attaining this sadvastu-in-essence is that one's existence merges into its pratyak sattá [witnessing counterpart].⁽⁵⁾ That which is non-matter, that is, devoid of any object, is satya [or satyavastu]. And that which is matter – but matter-in-essence – is close to non-matter. The remaining entities of the universe are all matter⁽⁶⁾ – some within the scope of conception, and some within the scope of conception and perception.

The sadvastu which undergoes no metamorphosis is the only reality. If we accept any reality other than this one, it will lead to the philosophy of infinite regress: there will be a crisis in human intellect. That is why it has been said, Nányat kiñcit varttate vastusatyam [“Nothing exists other than vastusatyam”].

Indra means one who has the predominant role in the field of action. In this sense, the king of the gods is called “Indra”. Tall shál trees are called indrataru. That which has a predominant role in activating one's existence is called indriya. The indriyas internalize and externalize tanmátras⁽⁷⁾ for a living entity: they assimilate and transmit the vibrational ideas that originate in the mind due to the influence of the binding forces. In the process of pratisaiñcara [the introversive phase of creation] in the Cosmic Cycle the indriyas develop this associative function. This function of the indriyas is their upádhi [special role], and because of this upádhi of the indriyas, the one Supreme Cognition appears to be many to the many unit entities. It is said,

*Rúpátiita soi Prabhu
Lákha rúpa dekháol
Áb hám kekrá heri.*

[That Supreme Formless One
Appears to be numerous –
Whom do I see now?]

The innumerable structures which arise as a result of the countless vibrational undulations of the Supreme Entity, have on the one hand enlivened every step of creation with restless vitality and blissful sweetness, and on the other, given scope for the mistaken understanding of Him as many, not one. From this mistake arises all life's delicious sweetness, its spicy flavours – and also its piercing, bitter scorpion stings, its heart-rending moans of grief. Hence in One we see many, in all their perfections and imperfections, in all their sweetness and bitterness – all due to the special role of the indriyas – Tayorabhedo'smin indriyopádhiná vae.

In the first stage of human life, when people notice the colourful processions of various tanmátras such as form, taste, smell, colour and touch, they immediately become attracted towards them. The

entire universe appears to be a grand caravan of many colours; it seizes their senses and their minds rush after it, taking it to be the goal of life. In the first stage, this enchanting material panorama propels people from their inner world to external life. If at that stage, someone tells them to move towards the internal world, they become irritated and annoyed. They think, "Oh, I'm quite fine here!" Blending their colours with the colours of all, strolling on soft carpets of green grass, they think, "All these things are meant for me!"

*Kii kathá úthe marmariyá bakultarupallave
Bhramar úthe guñjariyá kii bhásá
Úrdhvamukhe súryamukhii smariche kon vallabhe
Nirjharaníi bahiche kon pipásá.*

[I wonder why these bakula branches are murmuring,
And what the black bees are humming;
I wonder what lover the sunflower is remembering, with her face
upturned –
And what unquenchable thirst the flowing springs are feeling.]

This material-oriented existence is the first stage of human life. At this stage, one wants to express only one thing with the whole of one's being, and that is, "I exist, only I exist."

The material world is the subtle blend of hard and soft:

*Goláp sundar ati sákañtak vríte phote
Nirjhar madhur gati rukśa giripathe chote
Kamala sugandhe bhará janame paunkila sare,
Bhrame jiivapúrñá dhará jiivashúnya kaksá pare.*

[The beautiful rose blossoms on a thorny stem,
The graceful stream courses down a rugged mountain,
The fragrant lotus is born in a muddy pond,
This earth of many creatures revolves on its barren axis.]

Trials and tribulations compel people to ponder deeply; sorrows inspire them to analyse the law of cause and effect. Their wounded hearts want to be soothed with a healing balm from an entity greater than themselves. They realize then that there is an Entity greater than their little selves. Whatever might be their relation with that Entity, and whether that Entity is within their reach or not, they cherish the hope of gaining something from Him: they cry out, Tráhi mám páhi mám ["Save me, protect me"]!

Then they change their mental tune and say, "I exist, You also exist."

When this relationship of hope and fulfilment fails to remove their internal dissatisfactions, when the greenness of the external world fails to moisten the desert of their minds, when the seeds of their desires do not sprout, then they realize that they will have to go still deeper inside – the key to the solution lies deeper within. They are still within locked doors and windows; in search of the key, they move inwards, but they are unable to find it. They do not feel that they are even near a guide – far less in close association. Concentrating all their mental anguish, they begin to shed tears in their minds, and beating their heads, say to the unknown Lord of their life:

*Brthá janma gouñáyalun
Hena Prabhu ná bhajalun
Khoyáalun soi guñanidhi
Hámára karama manda
Ná milala eka bunda
Premasindhurasaka abadhi.*

[I have spent my life in vain;
Such a great Lord I did not worship –
I lost the greatest jewel.
I am indeed an unfortunate creature;
I never enjoyed
Even a drop of nectar of the love of God.]

Parama Puruṣa is the Supreme Cognitive Faculty; nothing is outside Him. He too feels the inner agony of despairing people in the core of His heart, and shows them the soothing path of enlightenment. Then those despairing people cry out in the exuberance of their joy, "You exist, O Lord, I also exist!"

They continue to move into the inner world. The charming allurements of the external world no longer keep their minds in thrall. The dazzling splendour of form and colour, their glittering attraction, no longer evokes any response in the innermost recesses of their minds. The radiance of the colourful world and the effulgence of their inner life become one. Just as –

*Prasád bale yá chili bhái táí habi re nidenkále
Yeman jaler bimba jalei uday jal haye se misháy jale*

[Prasád says, What you were in the beginning, You will become in the end –
Just as bubbles rising from the water, into the water will merge again.]

And further –

*Jal me kumbha hae
Kumbhame jal hae
Báhár bhitár pánii
Phátá kumbha jal jalhi samáná –
Iya tattva bujhae jīṇánii.*

[The pot is in the water,
The water is in the pot,
Water inside and outside.
If the pot is broken, the waters become one –
Only the wise understand this great idea.]

The indriyas' externalization and internalization of tanmátras from the external world then appears to be a play of Máýá. The external world merges into the internal world, and ultimately there remains only one Entity – "You exist, only You exist."

So it has been said, Jīṇánasyáyaṁ bhásate nányathaeva ["Of all knowledge, only this remains"].

25 June 1982, Patna

Footnotes

- (1) The word sámkhya means "that which is related to sámkhyá, numerals". –Trans.
- (2) Loss. That which has undergone sampramośa is, in the author's words, "not in a position to recreate [itself]". –Trans.
- (3) An indriya is a sensory or motor organ, together with its respective nerves, nerve fluid, and site in the brain. –Trans.
- (4) Translated "supreme truth" in the shloka above. –Trans.
- (5) Pratiipam means vipariitam ["opposite"], and aiṇcati means vijánáti ["knows"]. Prati + ak [short forms of pratiipam and aiṇcati] = pratyak ["the witnessing entity opposite to an object"]. [Thus the author paraphrases a well-known definition of pratyak.]
- (6) Sadvastu (matter) -in-fact and sadvastu (matter) -in-appearance. –Trans.
- (7) Tanmátra means "minutest fraction" of a given rudimental factor of matter; tanmátras are "inferences" radiating from objects which are received by the sense organs in the act of perception. –Trans.

Shivas Teachings – 2 (continued) (Discourse 12)

SHIVOPADESHA 2

*Átmajīṇánám vidurjīṇánám jīṇánányanyáni yáñitu;
Táni jīṇánávabhásáni sárasyaanaeva bodhanát.*

[Self-knowledge is the real knowledge – all other knowledge is a mere shadow of knowledge; and will not lead to realization of the truth.]

“Self-knowledge is the real knowledge.” Now the question is – what is *jñāna* [knowledge]?

The word *jñāna* in Sanskrit is derived from the root verb *jñā* plus the suffix *anā*. The same root verb, *jñā*, was changed into *keno* in old Latin. The root verb “know” in modern English is the transformation of the old Latin *keno*. Because the letter “k” was in *keno*, the letter “k” has been retained in the spelling of “know” although it is not pronounced in modern English.

Now what is the process of knowledge? It is said, “Subjectivization of objectivities is the faculty of knowing.” The external entity or entities which are being subjectivized are known as objectivity or objectivities.

Now the question arises, is it possible to take something of the mental world as objectivity and then subjectivize it? Yes, it is possible. To the existential “I” feeling, all the entities of the external world and the internal world also, all entities other than the existential “I” feeling itself, come within the scope of the faculty of knowing. But can the existential “I” know something higher than itself? It is indeed a very intricate question of psychology.

The subtlest feeling of existence is the very first stage of the mental world, and *Citisattā* [the Cognitive Faculty] is the witnessing entity of the functioning of this first stage of the mind. We say, “I know that I exist.” Here the “I” of “I exist”, in the nominative case, is the first stage of the mind, and the witness-ship of “I exist” lies in the “I” of “I know.” Here we see clearly that the witness of the first stage of the mind is subtler than the first stage of the mind – in fact, it is the subtlest entity of all.

Now the Cognitive Faculty may or may not function as the witnessing entity of the first stage of the mind. If it functions as the witnessing entity of the first stage of the mind, it is called *Sakala Citisattā* [Manifested Consciousness], and if it does not, it is *Niskala Citisattā* [Unmanifested Consciousness].

This *Sakala Citisattā*, being affected by its capacity of witness-ship, undergoes some kind of theoretical bondage, although it is not influenced by the three *guṇas*. This influence by the faculty of witness-ship does not take place in the case of *Niskala Citisattā*. But let me make it clear here that as there is no distortion in the faculty of knowing due to the influence of the *guṇas*, the bondage is purely theoretical, nothing more than that. This *Citisattā*, or Cognitive Faculty, when functioning as witnessing entity in relation to the Macrocosm, is called *Pratyagātmā* – which is *sakala* when assailed by *guṇas*, and *niskala* when unassailed.

How can the Cognitive Faculty, the Supreme Knower of the mind, become the object of knowledge in the practical field? The fact is that when the first stage of mind, or the existential “I”, thinks of the subject “I” of “I know”, its existence becomes subtler than the subtlest, and then finally merges into the Cognitive Faculty – *Mādhava Mādhava anukhan sumari Rādhikā Mādhava bheli* [“*Rādhikā* (*Rādhā*) while constantly remembering *Mādhava* (*Kṛṣṇa*) became *Mādhava* Himself”].

So we clearly understand that to know the Cognitive Faculty means to merge in It. It is like a salt doll trying to fathom the depth of the ocean, and in the process becoming one with the ocean itself; it could not return and tell others the story of how it felt while fathoming the ocean. This sort of becoming one with the ocean while trying to fathom it is termed “self-knowledge”. Theoretically, this self-knowledge is the real knowledge, and all other types of knowledge in the worldly sphere are not real knowledge, they are just the umbra and penumbra of knowledge. Generally, objective knowledge is called simply “knowing” but is not real knowledge. For knowledge of the objective world, the use of the root verb *vid* is more justifiable [than the use of the root verb *jñā*].

Vid is divided into different categories. There are mainly two divisions, *parāvidyā* [subjective knowledge] and *aparāvidyā* [objective knowledge]. *Parāvidyā* is that branch of knowledge which leads from analytical descent (from the infinite to the finite) to synthetic ascent (from the finite to the infinite). It helps human beings to reach the golden line of self-knowledge – the line which is the dividing line between objective knowledge and self-knowledge; the line beyond which is the sweet ideation of the all-pervasive Cognitive Faculty.

This *parāvidyā* is also divided into different stages: first, the comprehensive study necessary for the removal of any deficiency of knowledge; second, the process of rational analysis to derive benefit from the knowledge acquired and to control one’s own internal and external ideas; third, the consolidation of the spiritual ideology through *pariprashna* [spiritual inquiry]; and fourth, self-surrender to the Cognitive Faculty.

Aparávidyá [objective knowledge] is also divided into certain stages: first, the comprehensive study necessary for the removal of any deficiency in knowledge to promote the welfare of the world; second, the rational analysis of the knowledge acquired; and third, devising ways and means of applying the essence of the acquired objective knowledge for the welfare of the world.

In fact, parávidyá leads further – to the golden gate of mokśa (one of the four vargas, that is, káma, artha, dharma and mokśa⁽¹⁾) and says, “The last step you will have to take by means of átmajijñānam. My jurisdiction is only up to this.”

Parávidyá also brings dharma, another varga, within human reach, but aparávidyá too has some role in this. People say, Átmamokśārtham jagaddhitāya ca [“For self-realization and for the welfare of the universe”]. This wise saying of realized souls brings about a sweet adjustment between the objective world and the subjective world. While trying to attain self-knowledge – the highest fulfilment of átmamokśārtham – one will have to take the help of parávidyá; and to implement the second portion of this balanced ideology – jagaddhitāya ca – one will have to utilize both parávidyá and aparávidyá.

Those who think that they can concern themselves with parávidyá only, and finally, through its help, arrive at self-knowledge, are mistaken. Because while working exclusively for self-realization – átmamokśārtham – the worms of selfishness will burrow deep into the human mind and finally sap all the sweeter and finer human sensibilities, all the generous expansiveness of the human mind, and fling the person into a quagmire of remorse. So the endeavour to attain spiritual realization exclusively cannot be considered an ideal way of life.

Again, if someone works exclusively for the welfare of the world – jagaddhitāya – one should realize that to render selfless service, an absolutely pure mind is required, with the expansiveness of the vast ocean and the serenity of the blue sky. Otherwise, while promoting the welfare of the world, one may develop a selfish desire in one’s mind in a weak moment, as a result of which one may bring harm to oneself as well as to the universe. So those who do not aim at self-realization cannot promote the welfare of the world either.

That is why Shiva propounded átmamokśārtham jagaddhitāya ca. For self-realization, a pure science of spirituality is required, and for jagaddhitāya a happy blending between parávidyá and aparávidyá is necessary. In all mundane activity (for which the word káma is used – káma does not always mean the sexual urge), and for those endeavours which require mental force, the artha varga [psychic pabulum] is necessary, and for the attainment of artha, aparávidyá is indispensable.

So we see that knowledge in the true sense of the term is self-knowledge. And all other aspects of learning which we wrongly designate as knowledge are only certain types of knowledge – either parávidyá or aparávidyá. For a human being, parávidyá is essential; but aparávidyá cannot be ignored either. That is why people must cultivate parávidyá with all their minds, with all their hearts, with the whole of their beings. But at the same time, to successfully face the hard realities of this dusty earth, for prosperity in the material sphere, one will have to cultivate aparávidyá also. History, geography, the different fields of material science, psychology, geology, different branches of the humanities, etc., have all to be carefully studied. To promote the earthly well-being of the human race, literature, art and other harmless means of entertainment must be encouraged, and thereby all the potentialities of the human heart will be properly utilized. Then and only then will ideal human beings be created. Attaining self-knowledge through parávidyá, those ideal human beings will move towards their final destination, the Supreme Benevolence, and merge in the sweetest ocean of bliss for eternity. This is the real life of human beings – this is the ideal life.

Besides self-knowledge, the other branches of learning which we wrongly call knowledge – the two branches of vidyá – are shadows of knowledge.

Avabhāsa is the Sanskrit word for “shadow”. When a crude or a less brilliant object comes in contact with a luminous object or a celestial body, the dark object casts a shadow on the bright one. We cannot form an exact idea about an original object by seeing the shadow of the object. One can form an idea about a lichee tree by seeing the real tree, but one cannot form an idea about it by seeing its shadow – indeed, one cannot even be sure if it is a lichee tree or a lemon tree or any other tree.

Shadows are then divided into two kinds – umbra and penumbra.⁽²⁾ By seeing the umbra of something, some idea may be formed, but by seeing the penumbra, no idea can be formed. The earth being the nearest planet to the sun, the umbra that is cast by the earth on the vast sky is called ráhu in astronomy, and the penumbra is called ketu. Ráhu and ketu are combinedly called “the shadow planet,” that is, they do not have any real existence, they are merely two kinds of shadow. That is why they are located seven houses from each other in the zodiac. If in any particular month or ráshi [zodiac sign] the

full moon enters the seventh house of that particular sign, it will be covered by shadow; and that dark moon is then said to be in lunar eclipse:

*Ye ye máser ye ye ráshi
Tár saptame tháke shashii
Sei din yadi hay paornámásii
Abashyai ráhu gráse shashii.*

[If the moon remains in the seventh house
Of that month's ráshi,
And if that day is a full-moon day,
Certainly that ráhu eclipses the moon.]

We cannot form an idea about an original object by seeing its ketu, or penumbra. Next to self-knowledge, all the branches of so-called knowledge with which we are acquainted are not real knowledge, not even the umbra of knowledge – they are only the penumbra of knowledge. They cannot convey an accurate idea about any entity.

Yá sháshvatii kśemaṇkarii sá sárasattá – “That which leads to the permanent all-round welfare of living beings is the Quintessential Entity”. That which is conducive to welfare, but a welfare which is not permanent, is not worthy of being recognized as the Quintessential Entity. But in ordinary speech, we can give such entities temporary recognition as quintessential entities.

To increase the fertility of the land, we add fertilizer to it. We know that this will not increase the fertility of the land permanently. Fertilizer in Sanskrit is called sára [essence]. The hub of a wheel is called cakrasára [“the essence of a wheel”]. Food items with proper vitamins are called shvetasára. The gist of a discourse is called sára. When we explain a sentence or a part of a sentence we say it is the sárārtha [“the essence of the meaning”]. But it should be remembered that in none of these cases is the word sára being used properly.

When, in ascending towards increasing subtlety in the process of synthesis, the non-essential, or very temporary, aspects are discarded, it is said that we are moving from the non-essence to the essence. Again, in the next step, we move towards a greater essence by discarding the non-essence from the essence of the first stage. And when, thus moving, we reach the subtlest point in the objective world, we realize that the greatest essence is the Macrocosmic Mind and the Pará Prakṛti [Primordial Prakṛti].

To reach this Macrocosmic Mind and Primordial Prakṛti, no objective knowledge will be of any help. In this case, the final recourse is the extraordinary power born out of the guṇas. This power is not attainable by objective knowledge; it is attainable only by transcendental knowledge through sádhana. And if this is the case with the Macrocosmic Mind and the Primordial Prakṛti, then how can Parama Puruṣa, the Supreme Entity, be attained? Thus highly intelligent sádhakas, the greatest realized persons, all describe the Supreme Entity – Guru Brahma, Táraka Brahma – not as essence but as Sárátsára, the Quintessence, the Essence of the essence.

*Vandaná kariba ámi gurure ámar
Yini púrṇa, yini nitya, yini Sárátsára.*

[I shall worship my Guru who is complete in Himself,
Who is eternal – the Essence of all essences.]

To realize such a Quintessential Entity, only self-knowledge is required; but is this self-knowledge simply a dry path of knowledge?

If one wants to realize an entity, does one realize it only through knowledge? No, certainly not. To realize an entity, one must possess a loving heart, a sweet intellect, and a free flow of emotion. That is why in order to attain the Essential Entity, that is, the Macrocosmic Mind or the Primordial Prakṛti, the highest expression of knowledge may be helpful; but in the case of that Quintessential Entity, that sort of knowledge will not do at all. Not even an iota of the supreme spiritual world is attainable through intellectual extravaganza. I said a little earlier that by merging one's individual sweetness into the sweetest entity, the realization, “You exist, only You exist,” becomes firmly established. One becomes finally ensconced in that Supreme Entity. There is no other way. And this self-knowledge is the sweetest essence of the devotional feeling of one's heart.

25 June 1982, Patna

Footnotes

- (1) The four basic drives of human beings: physical, psycho-physical, psycho-spiritual and spiritual, respectively. –Trans.
- (2) Umbra is the completely-dark part of the shadow of a celestial body; penumbra is the indistinct shadow, the partially-illuminated region surrounding the perfect shadow of the umbra. –Trans.

Shivas Teachings – 2 (continued) (Discourse 13)

SHIVOPADESHA 3

*Na muktirtapanádhomádupavásashataerapi;
Brahmaeváhamiti jñátvá mukto bhavati dehabhrt.*

[Liberation is not attainable by penance, sacrificial rituals and hundreds of fasts.

Living beings attain liberation when they realize, "I am Brahma."]

The word mukti [liberation] is derived from the root verb muc plus the suffix ktin. Mukti means "means of removal", that is, "the fundamental wherewithal for the removal of bondages".

Obviously a question will arise – who should be liberated from bondages? Certainly the person whose hands and feet are tied and who cannot move at all, whose voice is totally silenced, whose feelings of the heart are suppressed, whose urges of life have no expression, who is physically behind bars, whose mind is caged by dogmas, whose soul is deprived of the blissful flow of nectar, whose path of progress has lost its way in a chasm, is indeed in bondage. The vigorous effort for emancipation from all bondages is termed sáadhaná, and the motive that inspires such efforts is called liberation.

It is said that bondages are of three types: ádhibhaotika [physical], ádhidaevika [psychic], and ádhyátmika [spiritual]. All kinds of worldly bondages – physical, economic, political, social, literary, and sociological – and also those relating to agriculture, industry, trade and commerce – all these are physical bondages. That is to say, the bondages concerning the quinquemental world are all physical bondages in the pervasive sense. Psychic distortions, mental clashes, doubts and confusions, superiority and inferiority complexes, etc., are all psychic bondages; and the bondages of reaction of one's actions, which are generally termed práabdha [unrequited reactions] are also included in the category of psychic bondages. All bondages concerned with unit consciousness and Supreme Consciousness, and the deeper feelings of inner anguish due to the non-attainment of the highest spiritual stance, are categorized as spiritual bondages.

Physical bondages are further divided into three main types – bhávagata bandhan [bondages of dogma], kálagata bandhan [bondages of time], and ádháragata bandhan [spatial bondages].

Bhávagata bandhan afflicts human beings the most. If an idea is imposed on human beings as a dogma, crushing the victim under its heavy weight, people realize that a tormenting bondage has been imposed on them. They well understand that the dogma has immobilized them, caused retardation instead of progress, and brought them to a virtual standstill. They realize that what they considered to be dharma was actually nothing but a colourful procession of various superstitions, and lest they raise their heads against those superstitions and smash that house of cards built on quicksand, certain ideas are constantly whispered into their ears: "You shouldn't do this, you shouldn't do that – it will bring about your ruin. If you do that, you will be doomed to hell, or if you do this, your tongue will fall off." People realize that their voices against dogma have thus been silenced by injecting fear complexes into their minds, and that they have been reduced to useless lumps of cow-dung. Nevertheless, since they lack proper initiative and drive, they willingly surrender themselves to fate, and accept their helpless shedding of tears as their appointed lot in life.

With changes in the time factor, the temporal bondages also change their condition in different circumstances; and with the changes in the spatial factors, the spatial bondages change their condition also. When people's feelings are deeply wounded, they decide to leave the state, the country, or the society, just to remove these bondages, and when there is no other way out, they decide to leave the world by committing suicide.

By adopting a sublime ideology in personal life, one can overcome all psychic afflictions. One should give up all those factors which are the causes of mental affliction in collective life, and at the same time, promote universal ideas.

And spiritual bondage means, "Though Parama Puruśa is my own property, exclusively my own, why am I not able to merge my life in the Cosmic life, to touch the core of my heart to the core of His heart, to blend my own sweetness in the universal sweetness?" This mental agony due to the non-realization of Parama Puruśa is spiritual bondage.

People make efforts to get rid of these triple bondages and that which leads to temporary success in these efforts is called artha. That which leads to temporary success, but on a larger scale, is called madhyārtha. And that which leads to permanent success is called Paramārtha.

Suppose a person is suffering from the pain of hunger. If someone offers him a few rupees, he therewith buys food and temporarily removes his hunger pangs. So for that person, money is artha. (Thus money is called artha in Sanskrit.) But his hunger for food is not permanently removed by money: he will feel hungry again tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. That is why money is artha, not Paramārtha. If he is given a huge sum of money, that may be madhyārtha, but it is not Paramārtha.

If in a country afflicted by scarcity of food grains, grain is distributed freely, or financial aid is granted, that is artha to those people, but this artha cannot remove their afflictions permanently. If instead some irrigation facilities are made available – river irrigation, well irrigation, subterranean irrigation, lift irrigation, etc. – in that case, their hardships are relieved to a great extent. They will not have to depend on the mercy of others, or wait for the favour of the rain clouds. They need not stand helplessly before others with begging bowls in hand. So the arrangement for scientific facilities is called madhyārtha.

But even an effective system of irrigation will not last forever. The underground water level may sink; perhaps the water table will dry up altogether; and the river water may dry up some day. The water vapour in the atmosphere which fills our reservoirs and ponds may also become exhausted.

So the best arrangement will be to distribute grain and to grant financial aid as artha, and as madhyārtha to provide for various kinds of irrigation system and artificial rainfall system. Some countries are doing this.

And simultaneously we should pray to Parama Puruśa, "O Lord, by applying the wisdom and intellect that You have been pleased to grant us, we have made these artha and madhyārtha arrangements, but ultimately the key to the solution is in Your hand." That is to say, without Paramārtha, the supreme artha, there can be no final arrangement. Only Paramārtha is the last word in liberation. Liberation of any other kind is not liberation in the true sense of the term.

So much for mukti. Now the word tapana is derived from the root verb tap plus the suffix anāt. Its etymological meaning is "to heat" or "to be heated". To heat and to be heated – both are necessary at certain times, but we cannot say that they are always necessary.

The colloquial meaning of tapana is, "to do something which heats the body and the mind". This may occur in two ways: either the human body or mind comes in contact with some hot object or sensation, or through the automatic motion of the limbs or the ectoplasm, the body or mind becomes heated.

Though the root verb of the word tapah [penance] is the same, tapah is also used in a special sense; it means to embrace the physical and mental hardships in order to alleviate others' difficulties, and to embrace those hardships in such a way that one's body and mind become heated.

In Sanskrit, one of the names of the sun is tapana, because the sun heats others by radiating heat and light. When a person comes physically in contact with some hot object, his or her body becomes heated. And as a result, a contraction occurs inside the body, and a considerable amount of sweat mixed with salt is emitted from the body. This is certainly a kind of physical affliction.

If a person hears some sentimental talk based on dogma for a long time, and his or her sentiments are aroused, and if words are used with great oratorical force or articulated in a very rhythmic or vibrant way, in that case also the mind becomes heated. Then the heated mind snaps the subtle link between the nerve cells and nerve fibres, and as a result, instead of remaining calm and tranquil, people lose their judgement; with their minds temporarily disturbed, they engage in inhuman activities. Usually when people's minds are clouded by dogmas, they easily become heated by hot language, writing and drawings.

If people voluntarily rub their limbs, with or without reason, their bodies immediately get heated and start sweating. This is self-generated heat in the physical sphere. Similarly, if people think of something exciting for a long period, say, if they think of their enemies for a long time, or if their minds are influenced by thoughts of greed for a long time, their mental bodies become heated and there is a temporary functional dissociation between the nerve cells and nerve fibres. In that case people lose their discrimination and become slaves of their passions. This is self-generated heat in the mental sphere.

So we see that generating heat is not always beneficial or noble. When someone does rigorous penance, for instance, with hands upraised for a long period, his or her blood circulation, nervous system and bone position are bound to be jeopardized. Will the pain in the arms of those who do penance with head downwards and legs upwards be an aid to their mental concentration, or will their minds be constantly focused on the pain? Will they be able to maintain their mental balance in such an unnatural state? When some practise rigorous penance sitting in the centre of a circle of fire, will not the fire's heat impair the natural functioning of their bodies and minds? Thus these types of penance are detrimental to health, what to speak of the attainment of liberation!

Those who think that rigorous penance will gain the affection of Parama Puruṣa are entirely mistaken. They try to achieve something, but fail miserably. Parama Puruṣa has never said, nor will ever say, that anyone should violate the naturalness of life and become abnormal, like a vegetating idiot. Rather He says, "All sing in unison – direct all your internal urges towards the Supreme One. Think of all the pains and pleasures of others as your own. Saṁgacchadhvaṁ saṁvadadhvaṁ saṁ vo manāṁsi jānātam."

Parama Puruṣa certainly did not create the world for this type of rigorous austerity or ostentatious penance. Nor is the world being maintained thus, nor will it be led towards its final fulfilment in this way. Rather Parama Puruṣa is leading the entire creation forward through the sweet ideation of all human minds, flowing in all directions, affectionate and loving, permeating each and every feeling with sweet harmony.

*Duniyāy morā sabāi bhāi
Sukha-duhkha samabhāg kare nova sakale tāt.*

[We are all brothers and sisters;
We will equally share all pleasure and pain.]

Indeed, there is reference to tapah in Yama and Niyama [moral code], but that means, "to accept physical hardships for others' welfare". In fact one's greatness lies in the degree one is able to accept hardships for the sake of others. Ordinary mortals attain the height of spiritual glory in this way. This tapah brings physical and mental purity and leads to mental expansion and spiritual progress; it helps in opening the golden gate to spiritual salvation. Thus it has been rightly said, "Fruitless penance never leads to liberation."

In ancient times, the sacrificial rituals homa and havana were used with different significances. Generally these rituals were held to mark the end of any religious or social ceremony. Mainly clarified butter was offered in the sacrificial homa ritual, but havana was slightly different. It was usually performed to please the various Vedic gods and goddesses. In a havana, besides offerings of clarified butter, there were offerings of various kinds of food such as wheat and dry and cooked rice; fragrant offerings such as sandalwood, incense, and dhunā [incense powder]; and offerings of the heads, blood and flesh of animals and vanquished enemies. Thus we see that while the homa rituals were held to mark the end of a ceremony, the havana rituals were held to gain some boon by propitiating the gods – for instance, to bring rain by invoking the grace of the rain-god, to escape from the ravages of floods by the grace of the god of water, etc. Gradually the difference between homa and havana has been obliterated, now people use the terms homa and havana interchangeably.

Ancient people believed that the fragrant smoke from these homa rituals would rise from the earth to the higher regions and, making the ether and air heavy with fragrance, would please the gods. The people thought that this scented smoke and perfumed air would be beneficial to health, improve mental functioning and transport people to the abode of the gods.

The sweet scent of the homa rituals may be pleasing to the nose, but it is certainly not good for health. Smoke is composed of unburnt carbon particles, and these particles are not at all good for health, since they harmfully affect the lungs. A small quantity of sweet fragrance may not damage the health and may indeed be rather pleasing to the mind, but its contribution to spiritual attainment is negligible. In fact, in terms of removing air pollution, as some contend, it is completely useless. Rather, certain

liquid or gaseous air purifiers which are prevalent these days are more useful, and those which will be invented in the future to remove water and air pollution will be still more beneficial.

Thus these offerings of delicious dainties in the sacrificial fire are all meaningless. There is no justifiable reason to believe that food burned in a sacrificial fire will rise to the higher regions in a subtle form and please the gods. So burning human edibles to ashes, thereby creating artificial scarcity, brings no benefit at all. It has no relation whatsoever to the attainment of liberation.

The word upavása is derived upa (prefix) – vas (root verb) + ghaiṇ (suffix). Upa means “near”: for instance, upanagarii (“suburb” – “near a city”), upadevatá (“demigod” – “nearly a god”), etc.⁽¹⁾

How should people conduct themselves in the world? The only aim of life is spiritual practice – the realization of the Supreme. But the body, composed of five fundamental factors, and the mind, which is related to this body, are in this physical world. So spiritual practice cannot be sustained by ignoring this physical world. People will have to conduct their lives in such a way that their mundane duties are properly discharged without disturbing their spiritual practice, which is the primary goal of life. Thus people will have to continue their spiritual practice as the primary mission in life, and at the same time fulfil their worldly responsibilities, considering them to be allotted by God.

But human psychology is such that after performing worldly duties for a while, people deviate from the main goal of life, sometimes so far that they tend to look upon their worldly duties as only a means of self-aggrandizement. This is the moment of their downfall – the black curtain of total annihilation falls on their lives.

Then what is the solution? On ordinary days people continue their spiritual practice as their mission in life and at the same time discharge their worldly duties considering them to be allotted by God. But on certain special days (the days should be fixed according to the almanac lest people forget them), people should give greater importance to spiritual practice than to mundane responsibilities; that is, their time and energy during those few days should be devoted more to spiritual practice than to worldly activities. These fixed days are called upavása days, since during these days people, keeping their minds engaged in spiritual matters, “live closer” to God, and any possibility of mental degradation is averted: their humanity is not endangered by the lengthening shadows of annihilation.⁽²⁾

But during the course of time, dogma has crept into this concept of fasting also. Some people started arguing that the system of fasting is a means to attain virtue: those observing fast are likely to secure a permanent place in heaven and can even see the grandchildren of their grandchildren before they die! Moreover, undue importance was attached to a few specific days of fasting – if people could fast on those specific days, it was said, they would attain heavenly bliss, not only in one life but for lives together.

*Shayan utthán páshmorá
Tár madhye bhiime choṇrá
Páglár caodda págliir át
Ei niye kál kát
E-o yadi ná karte páris
Bhagár kháde dube maris.*

Those days are: Shayana Ekádashii, Utthán Ekádashii, Páreshva Ekádashii, Bhaemii Ekádashii, Shiva Caturdashii, and Durgáśtamii, and in case one was unable to observe those fast days, then better to drown oneself in the waters of the Ganges, for that would bring more virtue.

So you see, a lot of mischief has been created regarding this issue of upavása, or fasting. By the spreading of these dogmas, the very dignity of upavása has been destroyed. In fact, fasting keeps the body free from disease, pure and dynamic, and makes the mind a fertile field for sádhaná by removing its impurities – but one certainly does not attain virtue or liberation thereby.

Those who observe a fast with the purpose of attaining virtue or spiritual salvation unnecessarily trouble themselves; there is no benefit either for individuals or for society. Fasting must be observed, but observing a fast for the purpose of attaining liberation is simply adding fuel to the fire.

The word bhr̥t is derived from the root verb bhr̥. Bhr̥t means “one who feeds others”. And bhr̥ta means “one who is fed by others”. So the word dehabhr̥t means “one who lives by feeding the body”. So every living creature of this universe is dehabhr̥t. Here the question is, how can a dehabhr̥t, a living being, attain salvation, for a living being has physical bondages, and as long as there are physical bondages, there are psychic bondages also. And how can one attain salvation with psychic bondages? It has been said that mortal beings can aspire to salvation by severe penance. But one cannot attain

liberation by offering clarified butter, rice, wheat, or animal blood in the sacrificial fire. In the same way one cannot attain liberation by observing hundreds of fasts with the false hope that upavāsa will bring virtue.

So what is the solution? Mortal human beings can attain liberation only if they channel all their psychic tendencies, all their thought-waves, towards the Supreme One, and then the dynamic flow of their minds, concentrated at a single point, becomes one with the Supreme Cognition, far beyond the scope of all bondages. The finite microcosm merges in the Macrocosm; the small "I" dissolves in the infinite vastness. In fact, this "I" never loses itself – the small "I" only becomes the great "I". The Supreme Cognition completely absorbs the individual "I", and this state of total surrender of the individual brings complete fulfilment. In that exalted state, one realizes that the millions of individual entities are all microscopic fractions of that oceanic Brahma, merely bubbles in that infinite sea. This is the state of realization of Brahmaevāham or Brahmāsmi ["I am Brahma"]. Hence it is said that if mortal human beings can surrender their all to the Supreme Entity by means of sādhanā, then they can certainly attain liberation, even while in their physical bodies.

But human beings cannot take even a single step forward towards Parama Puruṣa, much less attain liberation or salvation, by studying countless scriptures, by practising endless rigorous penances, by offering innumerable fuels to sacrificial fires or by observing fasts out of the greed to attain virtue.

*Kuliin bāmun thākbe parē
Tare' yābe káuṅgāl cāsā.*

[The highest-born one will languish in bondage,
While the pauper will be liberated.]

2 July 1982, Patna

Footnotes

- (1) And vas means "to live". The author proceeds to discuss practices that do, and practices that do not, help one to "live near" God. –Trans.
- (2) Since fasting was customarily observed on those days, "fasting" became part of the meaning. –Trans.

Shiva's Teachings – 2 (continued) (Discourse 14)

SHIVOPADESHA 4

*Na muktih śāstravyākhyāne na muktirvidhipūjane;
Kevalam Brahmanīśtho yah sah mukto nātra saṁśayah*

[Salvation cannot be attained merely by interpreting the scriptures, nor by worshipping deities according to specific scriptural injunctions;

One can attain salvation only by surrendering oneself to Brahma
– there is no doubt about it.]

Shāsanāt tārayet yastu sah śāstrah parikiṛttitah ["That which liberates through discipline is called śāstra, scripture"]. Each and every structure should have a controlling force, for in the absence of that controlling force, the different parts of that structure dissociate from the parent body, and this erosion ultimately results in its destruction. Now, these controlling forces of the parent body are of three types, since there are three spheres of existence. The controlling force of the physical sphere is either a living being or any mechanical device controlled by a human being. In the psychic world, the controlling force is a realistic and practical philosophy, and in the spiritual sphere, the controlling force is the intense urge towards God-realization.

Those who are endowed with this intense urge can say,

*Āmrāi jay kariba ei bhuban
Raṁamukhii nay harimukhii kari' man.*

[We shall conquer this world
Not by military might, but through God-realization.]

Victory by swords lasts only a short time. Before the swords become rusty, the victory vanishes into nothingness.

I was explaining the necessity of a controller of this physical world, and that controller is either an individual or a mechanical device made and controlled by an individual. A human individual is short-lived, and so is a mechanical device. So anything controlled by them cannot last long.

I just said that not by the sword nor any other military force, nor by manufacturing iron chains or coats of mail, can humans or machines or military weapons maintain any structure.

*Svarāj shudhu átmá hatei antarete mukti cáí,
Asir bale, masiir bale, peshiir bale mukti náí.*

[One can attain freedom only spiritually, for freedom lies in the mind. One cannot attain freedom with the help of sword, or pen or muscle.]

I said long ago, and I repeat, that human beings have no reason to worry about hydrogen bombs. A hydrogen bomb is only a mechanical device made by humans. One day, in the course of time, it will also be destroyed – its present importance, its current horror, will all vanish into nothingness. The same human intellect which invented these bombs will one day, in the natural course of events, invent a deterrent force against them.

Yes, it is true that all weapons can destroy a certain number of people – some kill a hundred, some a thousand, some a hundred thousand. That is how the lethal capacity of a weapon is measured. But however terrible a weapon might be, one day all its might will vanish into the void. There was a time when human beings were frightened by bows and arrows; today's humans, when they hear of battles with bows and arrows, simply laugh. This shows that however great might be the strength of weapons in a war of any age, or however powerful their controllers might be, their grip will one day be loosened, and the structure will decay into dust – just as the plaster on the wall gradually crumbles into the ground.

Still, a controller is necessary in the physical sphere, highly necessary, because in this physical sphere, those of animal nature seize the morsels of food from others' mouths like mad dogs. In this material sphere, living beings in human form, driven by dogmas, dash the only children of widows to the ground. In this material sphere, demons greedy for wealth starve the simple, innocent and disunited people to death, bit by bit. In this material sphere, the mighty rip out the tongues of the weak and silence their voices forever; they deprive them of the opportunity to express their inner urges. Thus there is a great necessity of a strict disciplinary code for this physical world. It is not necessary for this code of discipline to be always in the form of a book. Rather, a benevolent person of spirited intellect can work more effectively than a book in this regard.

I have often repeated that in this material world no structure can be maintained for long. It may be maintained somehow, but this maintenance becomes possible only when constant metamorphosis of the structure removes it far from its original form. This means that when a structure maintains its existence for long, it is found that it is surviving through constant changes. If this metamorphosis does not occur, even then it can survive – but this is very rare, and that existence is not like the glorious existence of enlightened and powerful people: the maintenance of such an existence is just like that of an earthworm – lowly and downtrodden.

If a person, rather than a written scripture, seeks to maintain any structure through the power of administration, then he or she must be as benevolent as the scripture. Where the question of benevolence and malevolence is concerned we will not deviate an inch from our ideology, nor will we allow others to do so. One cannot promote human welfare if one bothers too much about public criticism, about the reaction in the papers or among the voters.

The structures in the psychic world are created on the basis of specific ideals. These ideals are either a set of guidelines or an exemplary personality whose life is a beacon to others. But what really happens in the practical world? When we deeply analyse these ideals, we find two aspects – external and internal.

When ideals are propagated in such a way as to create a sweet synthesis between the internal and external worlds – that is, when that internal sweetness is expressed externally and there is a harmonious parallelism between internal and external – then those ideas become permanent. It will not be wrong to say that there has never been such an ideal. Thus people, while trying to express so-called ideals, have met with opposition at every step.

By opposition here I do not mean that opposition which seeks to thwart one's progress – that opposition is a helping force. Here by opposition I mean that difficulty which emerges from the so-called ideology itself – when the ideology itself is a block to progress. We have seen many apostles of non-violence in this world of ours who gave the impression by their writings and speeches that they had come to transform the very dust particles of the earth into spiritual essence, into a spiritual paradise. People offered all the sweetness of their hearts, and all the benevolent thoughts of their minds, unto their feet. But later they discovered that those apostles, making an abrupt about-face, deserted them at the time of crisis. They polluted their tongues with their hypocritical statements, and the people felt helpless and betrayed.

Generally people use the empty words of philosophy like tinsel to cover their internal blackness of character. Some of this tinsel is golden, some silver, some of a variety of colours. At first, people who have lost their way, or strayed from the path, are attracted by these bright colours, like those deceived by a mirage. Later on they lose everything, and their knees broken, they fall and meet their deaths in the scorching heat of frustration. Sometimes, before their deaths, they are able to recognize the illusion of the mirage, but in most cases they are unable to discover it before they breathe their last. The lethal nature of these defective philosophies remains unknown to them forever. In the psychic world, the implementation of these fatuous philosophies can wreak havoc.

Human beings are predominantly mental beings. Psychic urges and mental preoccupations influence them much more than the stimuli of the physical world, and bring them greater opportunities for self-expansion. But if there is the slightest defect in the drives and urges that guide them in the psychic world, then this not only affects a single individual, it affects the larger community, and that too not only for a short while – it submerges the entire community in the quagmire of frustration for an extended period of time. And when the people discover that they are immersed in this all-engulfing morass, and try to save themselves by pulling themselves out of it, step by step, they sink more and more deeply into it. Thus the system of control in the psychic world should be even stricter than in the physical world.

If one is not able to give the people proper guidance, then at least one should not misguide them. One must not divert them from the proper path by exploiting the tender and delicate sentiments of the human mind. In the physical world there should be a strict controller as a *shástra*⁽¹⁾ – and it is better to have a strong personality than a written book – but in the mental sphere the scripture and the person who upholds the scripture have equal importance as far as their utility and practical value is concerned. There must be an excellent and all-embracing philosophy, in which there should be no loophole in any sphere of mind as far as possible. Exactly in the same way, to implement that philosophy, there must be a pioneering personality of high integrity and superb intellect. If there is any defect in philosophy, but if there is no defect in that great personality, then during the lifetime of that personality the defect of the philosophy will not be able to do any considerable harm to the community: normally the harm will come after his or her demise.

But even if there is no defect in the philosophy but the person who takes the responsibility of implementing the philosophy is full of defects (actually we cannot call such a person a "pioneer"), then that high philosophy will remain confined to books only. The society will rush headlong to the depths of degradation, and no one will remain to save it. The people's copious tears will drench their clothes, and they will die, banging their heads against the closed doors of human liberation. For them there will be no escape.

In the past, hundreds of philosophies emerged on this earth; these philosophical treatises developed the psychic structures of human beings and became the fountainhead of human thought; even if they tried, people could not avoid the influence of those philosophical ideas. Whatever they might say or write, their thoughts always hovered around those ideas that were so deeply implanted in their minds. Thus those who seek to provide a lasting philosophy to society will have to shoulder a great responsibility: to be successful, they must combine a profound knowledge of philosophy with a deep sense of responsibility and an unblemished love for humanity.

At one time people were told that this world is for human enjoyment only, so the existence of all the plants, of all the birds and animals, in the world is intended merely to provide objects of enjoyment for human beings. Their hopes and aspirations, their intense desire to live, their pains and pleasures, their affectionate family or community lives are simply without value. However much a baby goat may wish to live, the main consideration is how much meat that kid carries on its frame. This defective philosophy has made people ruthlessly violent – even more dangerous than blood-thirsty tigers. Tigers kill only to fill their stomachs, to preserve their physical existence; whereas human beings kill animals mostly out of greed. Generally people have resorted to hypocrisy to camouflage this instinct of greed; they have killed

animals on the pretext of pleasing the gods, while actually their main motive in doing so was to please their own tongues. These are all the inevitable results of such defective philosophies.

Some philosophies have taught their own [religious or caste] communities, "The members of this community are the favourite children of Parama Puruṣa – others are cursed and unwanted." Due to this defective teaching the people of one community have even considered the destruction of the members of another community as an act of virtue, and stained the stony altar of human society with the blood of innocent people. In the blood of these innocent victims, the blind adherents of such defective philosophies have taken a holy bath of "liberation". What a horror! Such false philosophies have taught, "Well, if we exploit the people with our intellect, what's the harm? It is also a labour to apply the intellect, and we have the right to do so!" On the basis of this argument a handful of parasites have gorged themselves on the blood of millions of people, while countless people have been reduced to living skeletons. Such fraudulent philosophies have diverted many people from the path of morality and left them devoid of dharma, addicted to carnal pleasures – infernal creatures. By providing such a distorted interpretation of dharma, they have deliberately prevented people from gaining a correct understanding of dharma, and thus they have betrayed humanity in the most inimical manner. They have taught people to view each other with suspicion. By restricting social welfare activities to their community, they have kept the rest of the people in the dark about the true state of affairs. They have not let the people know whether they were actually the promoters or detractors of human welfare. By raising an iron curtain, a veil of dark ignorance, before them, they have taught people to chatter a few chosen, tutored sentences. They have confined them within a small dungeon, with its doors and windows locked – they have converted them into owls of darkness. This is the inevitable outcome of those pseudo-philosophies.

I said a little while ago, and I say again, that the psychic structures of human beings should be created by an all-encompassing philosophy which combines the magnanimity of the sky with the vibrational vastness of the ocean, ruffled by endless waves. A philosophy which fails to do so plunges people into the dark caverns of dogma and stifles their mundane, supra-mundane and spiritual progress under its crushing weight. People forget that the unlimited expansion of intellect is the predominant quality of human beings. When they lose this quality and become like beasts drawn to sensual pleasures, then regardless of what they might have achieved, they hardly deserve to be called human beings. Thus it is the duty of human beings to embrace with open heart and outstretched arms that all-inclusive philosophy which will never encourage them to harm humanity, either directly or indirectly.

It is universally true, for all ages and all realms, that dharma is the main current of human life. It is the impetus of living beings; it is also their source of wealth and the guidance for their journey through life. In the pervasive sense of the word, all objects, animate and inanimate, have their respective dharma: that is, dharma denotes the very existence of an object. In its narrow sense, dharma is less manifested in inanimate entities and more manifested in animate ones. In animate entities, the manifestation of the dharma of non-human creatures is instinctive and inborn. But the dharma of human beings is much more than this: it permeates and penetrates each and every sphere of life. Hence in the realm of dharma, the only true guide and controller, motivating force and protector of the people, is an excellent and comprehensive ideology which provides definite, clear-cut and bold directions for all aspects of human life – from one's personal daily routine, to one's social activities and collective motivation, to the spiritual inspiration which brings one closer and closer to God. A scripture which does not fulfil these conditions is not worthy of being called a scripture at all. Such a scripture does not contain the light of consciousness according to the definition *Shāsanāt tārayet yastu sah shāstrah parikiṛttitah* ["That which liberates through discipline is called *shāstra*, scripture"]. We should also remember that in the realm of dharma there must be clear-cut injunctions in the form of dharma *shāstra* [scriptural treatises], and simultaneously there must be strict guardians who during their lifetimes guide themselves as well as others according to those scriptural injunctions. After their demise, they will live forever in their teachings, which, though given for a particular age, will become a code of conduct for all time.

The spiritual world is the source of all the actions of passion and dispassion in human life and is the life-giving current of all the codes of conduct of existence. Thus in the spiritual world, there should not be anything which will divert human beings from the path of synthesis to that of analysis, which will provoke divisive tendencies and restrict collective existence within narrow confines.

Nothing should ensnare people in the illusory net of pettiness in any sphere of life, from the general code of spiritual conduct to the universal and eternal principles of life – lest the voracious fangs of the all-consuming *Máyá* devour them. Thus the scriptures containing spiritual injunctions must be totally flawless, and the pioneering personality must be a strict and benevolent guardian with unyielding conviction.

Thus I repeat: Shásanát tárayet yastu sah shástrah parikiirttitah. There is the necessity of scripture in all the four vargas of human life.⁽²⁾

The scripture which is required in the spiritual field is called dharma shástra, the treatise of spiritual injunctions, as discussed above; and Brahma in the form of guru is the controller of the scriptures. The third factor is the philosophical treatise relating to the mental world, called darshana shástra; and with this third factor there must also be a fourth factor, darshana pravaktá, that is, a propounder who will train the people in philosophy, for the philosophical treatises may be wrongly interpreted.

For instance, it was written, Vidhavá agre gamísyati ["A widow should go (die) before (her husband)"]. But later, due to a defective interpretation, this was misread as Vidhavá agne gamísyati ["A widow should go into the fire"]. As a result, hundreds of thousands of innocent widows were burnt alive on the funeral pyres of their husbands. Hence the necessity of a proper trainer, well-versed in philosophy.

In the scripture of the psychic world, generally called darshana shástra, there should not be the least sprinkling of dogmas, because this sort of philosophically-oriented dogma cumulatively increases the distortions in the psychic world. These dogmas enter the human mind like fine needles and come out like iron ploughs. If one tries to cast them out, then the whole psychic structure is demolished. If a tender banyan plant grows at one corner of a fine mansion, and if its growth is unchecked for long, then that small plant develops into a gigantic tree, and when one tries to tear it down, the entire mansion crumbles to the earth.

In the mundane sphere, as well, there is the necessity of a scripture which will systematically control the undulating waves of the psychological, political, social and economic aspects of human life. There must not be the least dissonance in the social harmony. Along with a scripture for the mundane world, there must be the powerful control of an enlightened and fiery personality; otherwise the swarms of self-seeking ants, greedy for enjoyment, will devour all the sugar prepared with such arduous human labour; otherwise the gluttonous cattle, thrusting their heads through the holes in the hedgerows beside the road, will ravage the tender green plants of the psychic world of human beings.

This controlling scripture is the samája shástra, or social code [the fifth factor of shástra vyákhyána], and the special spirit which this social code generates in human minds is the social spirit.

When a particular shloka or sútra [aphorism] or any expression is presented to an inquiring person in a particularly dignified way, this is called vyákhyá or vyákhyána. The readers or audience cannot properly grasp the inner essence of a succinct shloka or aphorism; thus for the easy understanding of the readers or audience, the shlokas should be properly explained with relevant commentaries and annotations. The words which are usually neglected are thus given new significance and presented to the readers with special dignity. This is the inner spirit of vyákhyá or vyákhyána [scriptural interpretation].

I have already said that there are various types of scripture pertaining to the different spheres of life, and in the scriptures, too, the ideas are presented in a few words. In very few cases only are they elaborated. To present dharma shástra [spiritual scriptures], dharma guru [spiritual preceptor], darshana shástra [philosophical treatises], darshana pravaktá [propounder of philosophy], samája shástra [social code], samája neta [social leaders] and samája ádarsha [social ideals] in the proper perspective is the main purpose of shástra vyákhyána. Without proper interpretation, the shástras remain difficult to understand and sometimes unintelligible. Thus the scriptures should always be interpreted by qualified scholars, competent philosophers, and penetrating thinkers. If one tries to interpret a profound scripture with superficial knowledge, the interpreter appears ridiculous and the audience is confused.

There are some people who are neither scholars, nor philosophers, nor penetrating thinkers, but merely wander about interpreting scriptures as a means of livelihood. They utterly fail to present the proper matter in the correct perspective before the audience. Such people may be successful in earning a living in the name of shástra vyákhyána, but they do more harm than good to the society. There are still others who interpret the scriptures just to exhibit their intellect – to procure for themselves a certificate of erudition. They too remain far from the living spirit of the scriptures, from the One who is their fountainhead of inspiration. So how can one attain liberation through scriptural interpretation? Rather, some interpreters become inflated with vanity and stray from the supreme goal of life. They become more degenerated than common people; and thus it has been said by Shiva, Na muktih shástra vyákhyáne ["Scriptural interpretation does not lead to liberation"].

Vidhi means the code of discipline, anushásana. What is anushásana? Hitárthe shásanam iti anushásanam – "The rule of regularity against irregularity, of discipline against indiscipline, of integrity against characterlessness, or moral rectitude against moral degeneration – the injunction of all

progressive and synthetic movements against any degrading and analytic momentum – is termed anushāsana.”

This anushāsana varies from person to person. For some, a small offense may result in a severe penalty; for others a serious crime may meet with light punishment. Neither of these is desirable. Thus when those of wisdom, intelligence, and balanced intellect formulate a code of discipline based on justice, this is called vidhi [decree].

Regarding reactions of actions, vanity of authority, and the lofty arrogance of doership, even learned scholars and wise people together cannot frame laws – only Parama Puruśa can. This is the Cosmic law. That is, reactions of actions and other matters which are under providential decree are not controlled directly by Parama Puruśa but through His Cosmic laws. Nor does He interfere in these matters. Vidhilipih akhaṇḍaniyā vidhātāpi khaṇḍane asamarathah [“The Cosmic decrees are inexorable, even Parama Puruśa cannot violate them”]. As Parama Puruśa has made these inexorable vidhis, one of His names is “Vidhātā”.

When in difficulty, people beat their heads and moan with tears in their eyes, “Oh, Parama Puruśa, why have You done this to me?” But in fact it is an injustice to complain thus to Parama Puruśa when one is tormented by afflictions, because in all the supra-mundane matters of the universe, Parama Puruśa does everything by means of His Cosmic laws; He does not do anything by Himself. It is because of His decree that fire burns. Fire burns the fingers of an innocent child as well as of an adult: Parama Puruśa does not burn anyone’s fingers. If He wants to do anything directly, violating His own laws, the entire system of the Cosmos will collapse. So although He can do so, He will not.

If Parama Puruśa wants to forgive someone, to remove one’s afflictions, He does so indirectly by inspiring him or her to perform some good deeds. But one should remember in this case that everyone is bound to reap the good consequences of good deeds and the bad consequences of bad deeds. The reactions of actions are never reaped in exact proportion to the original actions. One can develop the capacity to bear sufferings at the time of hardship by the grace of Parama Puruśa: it is indeed a great blessing from Him.

At a time of great difficulty, when agony swells people’s hearts and they are unable to restrain themselves, the sufferers should say only one thing to Parama Puruśa: “O my Parama Puruśa, the life of my life, the pupil of my eyes – give me the strength to endure.”

Now, what is pūjā or pūjana? When a person, with or without any selfish motive, offers his or her deep reverence to an entity with undivided concentration, with or without external paraphernalia such as flowers, bel leaves, sandalwood paste, Ganges water, basil, bananas, rice, etc., that is called pūjā or pūjana. And the type of worship which is performed with selfish motive and external paraphernalia is called arcā or arcanā. The type of worship which is performed with or without selfish motive, but certainly without any specific external paraphernalia, is called prārthanā. And the special type of pūjā which is performed without any selfish motive or external paraphernalia is called Brahmasadbhāva [ideation of Brahma]. Now, these systems of worship are further divided into certain stages of priestly ritual, for instance: auṅganyāsa [bodily gestures], karanyāsa [hand positions], ācamana [sipping holy water], shikhābandhana [tying ritual hair-knots], āvāhana [invoking the deity], mālyadāna [garlanding the deity], tiladhāraṇa [smearing the forehead with vermilion or sandalwood paste] and visarjana [immersion of the deity in water]. This systematic mode of worship is called vidhipūjana [systematic worship].

It does not require much mental effort to understand that while performing this latter vidhipūjana, the worshipper’s mind does not at all flow towards his or her iśta, nor does it even flow towards the idol of that iśta; the mind rather flows towards the physical gestures which must be performed, etc. And if the priest has to conduct worship in ten places in the morning without taking any food or drink,⁽³⁾ then we may not comment on those pūjās performed during the first part of the day; but regarding those pūjās performed in the latter part of the day, certainly there is a tug-of-war between the demands of the digestive juices and the demands of the rituals! And the worshipper’s mind will certainly flow towards this internal tug-of-war. So the pūjās performed during the last part of the day are not at all vidhipūjana in the strict sense of the term – they are not even so-called ordinary pūjās. And this is the natural psychology of human beings performing vidhipūjana without food or drink. Moreover, if the priest glances over to verify if all the necessary paraphernalia have been assembled according to the regulations, the priest’s mind will flow towards material objects – certainly not towards his iśta. Thus it has been rightly said, Na muktih vidhipūjane [“Ritualistic worship does not lead to liberation”].

The literal meaning of Brahma is “One who is great”, and its metaphorical meaning is Brhadvāda Brahma, Brāhmanadvāda Brahma: “One who is great and has the capacity to make others great also”.

Now, there may be a person who tries to destroy others by squashing them like ants or trampling them underfoot. Such a person may be “great” according to the word’s literal meaning, but certainly not in the noble spirit of the term. One who opens new paths for the development of others, one who elevates them from degradation, is great. This is the underlying spirit of the word Brahma: He does not wish the destruction of anyone; He wants to establish all in the exalted state of expansion. He wants all to shine in the brilliance of their existence. Thus to all the entities of the universe, He is Púrña Brahma [Full Brahma] – only He is Brahma. He is the unparalleled Brahma, the incomparable.

*Púrñamadah púrñamidaṁ púrñád púrñamudacyate;
Púrñasya púrñamádāya púrñamevāvashisyate.*

[This is whole, that is whole. From the whole, the whole has emerged.

If the whole is removed from the whole, the whole remains.]

He is whole, púrña. The term púrña has two meanings. One meaning is “flawless” or “unblemished”, the second is “immeasurable”. Brahma is púrña in both meanings. This Entity is established in His “whole”-ness – here, there, everywhere, in all directions, in all the lokas [realms of existence] and beyond. If for the sake of argument we remove from this Whole Entity not only one or two finite entities but the Infinite Entity – still what remains is whole. All the entities of the universe have emerged out of that Whole; they are all being maintained in that Whole; and they will all finally dissolve in that Whole. He is not only that Entity de grande, He is also the aggrandizing entity; He also wants to make others great by loving them and bringing them nearer and nearer to Him. If at all living beings have any goal in life, it is He; He is the culminating point of all creatures. He is also the target of all life’s urges, of all the inner vibrations of the mind, of all the struggles of the heart. *Tini pramatha náth, tini manmathanáth* [“He churns the innermost core of our hearts, He churns the innermost core of our minds”]. He is the dearest and most benevolent entity for all living beings confined in bondage on the lower levels of existence; and for those whose minds have evolved to subtler realms through proper psychic churning, He is dearer than life.

When intelligent people channel all their thoughts, all their goading propensities, and all the detachment of their minds towards that benevolent Entity, this auspicious movement is called *niśthá*. Those of balanced wisdom, discerning intellect, and profound insight who direct all the noble impulses of their minds, and all the sincerity of their hearts towards this Brahma, will start their Brahma *sáadhaná* at the first stage of *niśthá*, and in the last stage finally establish themselves in *Brahmasadbháva* [God-realization]. Even in the early stages of Brahma *sáadhaná*, one does not require any external paraphernalia.

*Jagat ye máyer chele tár ki áche par bhávaná?
Tumi trpta karte cáo máyere hatyá kare chágálcháná?
Prasád bale bhakti mantre shudhui re tár upásaná
Tumi lokdekháno karbe pújá má to káro ghus khábe ná.
Man tomár e bhram gelo ná
Kálii kema tá ceye dekhle ná.*

[This entire creation is the child of the Divine Mother – all are equal for Her;

Can you please this Mother by sacrificing goats?

Prasád says you can worship Her only with devotion;

How can you worship Her with external pomp and show? Mother will not accept such a bribe from anyone.

O mind, you could not remove this error–

You never really understood Kálii at all.]

One can easily understand that here the Divine Mother, Kálii, refers to Parama Puruśa, to Parama Brahma.

A spiritual aspirant who is blessed with this type of *niśthá* for Brahma *sáadhaná* will certainly attain this most exalted state of God-realization, *Brahmasadbháva*. There is not the least doubt in this instruction of Shiva. Thus it has been said, *Kevalam Brahmaniśtho yah sah mukto nátra samśayah*. [“One can attain salvation only by surrendering oneself to Brahma – there is no doubt about it”].

9 July 1982, Patna

- (1) Literally, "scripture"; more broadly, a guiding entity, whether a person or a book. –Trans.
- (2) The four vargas are the four basic drives of human beings: physical, psycho-physical, psycho-spiritual and spiritual. In addition to shástra itself, there is the necessity of shástra vyákhyána; the various factors of which the author now proceeds to enumerate. –Trans.
- (3) Pújás are traditionally performed without eating anything on the day of the ceremony. –Trans.

Shiva's Teachings – 2 (continued) (Discourse 15)

SHIVOPADESHA 5

*Yadabhavat yadbhavati yadeva bhavyamasti;
Teśám vilakśaño sáksii cinmátro'ham Sadáshivah.*

[Whatever has been created in the past, is existing in the present, or will be created in the future.
I, Sadáshiva, the sole cognition, am the supreme witness of all, having the opposite characteristics to all.]

The Sanskrit root verb bhú means "to be", and abhavat means "has been created". Now, what is the meaning of "has been created"? Everything in this universe is emanating from the Cosmic Nucleus, and is always moving, in systaltic fashion, from far to farthest, and from near to nearest. The minuteness or vastness of an object is determined by the wavelength of its vibrations. As a result of the constant buffeting by surrounding waves, great objects are gradually pulverized into smaller particles, and in the convergence of innumerable waves, small particles gradually expand into vast proportions. All entities are constantly being transformed from vast to minute, and from minute to vast.

There is no such thing as status quo in this created world. And this conversion into vastness or minuteness is occurring due to the variation in the state of internal and external tanmátras. This is how the universe has been created, this is the play of creation.

Khelicha e vishva laye, he virát shishu ánamane.

* * *

Pralaya sriśti taba putula khelá nirajane Prabhu nirajane.

[O Great Child, you are playing with this universe, absentmindedly.]

* * *

[Destruction and creation are the play of your dolls
In a lonely place, O Lord, in a lonely place.]

In this eternal play on the body of the Infinite, from the Cosmic viewpoint, there is no time, no object, no living being, no spatial measurement. This divine play is totally beyond time, place and person. And the soul of this sport, the central figure of this blissful game, is beyond the reach of all. In this flowing Cosmic dance, the play of consciousness with matter goes on and on – the play of the vast with the small, of the conceivable with the inconceivable.

In this flowing dance, whenever any material entity comes in contact with any unit consciousness, then that object comes within the internal conception of that unit mind, or within its perception of tanmátras. The unit consciousness or unit mind can understand these tánmátrik essences only superficially, not profoundly. When unit minds gain a superficial perception – that is, when they come in contact with the tanmátras, or when they go beyond the range of these essences – when the whisper of the distant ocean of infinity beckons, with a sweet hint of bliss – then those minds make an imaginary measurement of the motivity of action. This mental measurement of the motivity of action is called kála, or time. And this mental measurement, or the idea of time, applies only to finite entities, not to the Infinite.

The mental reckoning of this time factor is not an uninterrupted flow – it is a rapid succession of discontinuous fragments; and by fusing together these disjointed fragments of time, we create a totally imaginary concept of a vast expanse of time.

That imaginary period of time from which the unit mind is moving away, we call abhavat [past]. Even upon cursory analysis, one can understand that what is past to a particular person or a particular place, is not past to another person or place. The Cosmic dance is flowing in an endless continuum; the past is still related to the present. Something which has been lost in the remote past in the history of this earth is still intimately connected to the present, on stars millions upon millions of light-years away.

Thus we cannot simply ignore or deny the existence of that which is past. The “past”, or abhavat, is only a relative idea, a relative expression.

*He púrña taba carañer káche
Yáhá kichu sab áche, áche, áche
Nái, nái bhay se shudhu ámári
Nishidin kándi tái.*

[O Full One, whatever there was at
Your feet still is, is, is;
Only I am afraid of loss,
So I weep day and night.]

We cannot say that something which has gone out of human reach, which is lost forever to human beings, no longer exists. For the Supreme Cognition, there is no bondage of relativism. What is considered past to the people of the relative world remains ever-present on the lap of Sadáshiva, the Infinite Consciousness, like a child beaming with endless laughter – a loving child dancing on the lap of the Supreme Father for eternity. The child of the past was never lost, is never lost, and never will be lost.

According to the science of time, the present, as a relative factor, is not as long as the past or the future. An eternal clash and cohesion among objects is taking place on the infinite body of the Cosmic Mind. When any entity, whether spiritual, mental, or physical, comes in contact with one or more finite entities, and when that entity can assimilate and transmit the tánmátrik reflections and refractions, that period of assimilation is termed in common language as “present”. When the assimilation or transmission of tanmátras ceases, or is transcended, that is termed as “past”; and when something has not yet come within the scope of tánmátrik assimilation and transmission, it is called “future”.

I said a while ago that the present as a relative factor does not have the significance as the past and the future, because the present is a continuously moving entity; one moment it seems to be existing, the next moment it seems to have disappeared. One moment it seems that the present has not yet arrived; the next, it has already come. Hardly do we see anything before it disappears into the bosom of the past. While one is thinking of something which has not occurred, suddenly it appears – and the next moment it loses itself in the depths of time. So upon subtle analysis, we find that what we call bhavati [present] is partly in the bosom of the future, and partly in the bosom of the past. That portion of the past or of the future which a person can relate to is considered as present; therefore the present always varies from person to person.

One person says, “Just listen! Mr. So-and-so is still singing the Áshávarii melody.”⁽¹⁾ Another says, “What melody? I can’t hear it any more.” The musician is singing Áshávarii at a particular time: one person can hear it, and another cannot. To the person who hears it, the music is present; to the one who can no longer hear it, the music is already past.

Thus far I was saying that the present has no absolute value whatsoever, and so far as its relative value is concerned, that too should be carefully considered. But I must add one thing here – that in the relative world in which we are living, the past and the future carry tremendous value. So if you declare the present to be valueless, people may accept this because of your intricate philosophical arguments, but reality cannot accept it. Thus the children of this dusty earth cannot deny the existence of the present; and because of this, Shiva, the staunch realist, declared, Varttamáneśu vartteta [“Live in the present”].

The present, which is the result of the convergence of past and future, will certainly be recognized as the undulation of waves in the infinite Cosmic body. And the Supreme Consciousness, in whose vast bosom these undulations of the so-called present rise and fall, is seeing all the stages of this vibrational flow, is knowing them, and, by His sacred witness-ship, making their existences flow with sweetness. Thus Sadáshiva, the repository of cognition, knows everything that has been thus far created.

That which is yet to be, is the impending result of the Cosmic laws of causation. People well know that when they put their hands in fire, they will certainly be burnt; but children who are ignorant of the burning power of fire may put their hands in the fire. It is not their mistake – it is their ignorance.

In the sphere of material science, because scientists have understood, to some extent, the properties of animate and inanimate, movable and immovable entities, because they have discovered the operation of the law of cause and effect in these entities, they are able to prepare newer and newer substances – medicines, etc. – in their laboratories. Yet how much have they really learned so far? Very little. And yet, in their laboratories, they manufacture many new inventions – beneficial and malignant as well. They feel great satisfaction in discovering all the beneficial aspects of some of their inventions – and great fear in discovering the dangerous and harmful potentialities of others. Yet how little they really know!

People do not fully know the nature of any element or compound – perhaps they do not understand even a small fraction of it. What to speak of other objects, how little they know of themselves! Their nearest entities are their own selves, but they know themselves so little. Because of this limited self-knowledge, people always lack self-confidence. The Supreme Consciousness, in whose vast bosom all the finite entities are being created, maintained, and destroyed, fully knows the nature of each and every entity, one hundred percent. That entity may not know itself at all, or may know itself only a little, but the Supreme Consciousness knows it in full.

People who are inflated with pride because of their invention of a single lethal weapon, and dream of shaking the very earth under their arrogant footsteps, should realize that their own existence is quite insignificant, and their lethal weapons are still more insignificant. Those people who try to terrorize others with their deadly arms cannot resist or suppress the spiritual expansion of human beings – their very birthright. Only the Supreme Entity, in whose infinite body all existences have had, are having, and will have, their rhythmic progression and retrogression – only He knows which event has followed and will follow another in the continuous flow of expression of the law of cause and effect.

So it has been said that Yadeva bhavyamasti [“Whatever will be, will be”]. Whatever will happen, whatever is destined, is already known to Sadāshiva, the All-knowing Entity. He knows everything in a natural way because no one is outside His all-encompassing surveillance. He is well aware of the strength and ability of all, but people do not realize this.

*Katāṭuku bal dhare e mānav
Kata bal dhare bidhātā tāt!*

[How little strength humans possess,
And what vast strength He possesses!]

Abhavat, the past, and bhavati, the present, and bhavyam, the future – none of these three is separate and distinct from the others. Nothing suddenly emerges or suddenly disappears; all entities respectfully obey the Cosmic laws in a disciplined way and proceed from the future to the still more distant future in the panoramic flow of the Cosmic Cycle. No one can resist the momentum of this Cosmic flow – no one can contain it – no one can suppress it.

In the annals of human history, many truths and falsehoods have been recorded. Attempts have been made to belittle the importance of great personalities, to erase them from the pages of history, and often small and insignificant people have been magnified and presented as great. But none of these attempts has been successful. Everything is written on the pages of eternal time exactly as it happened; the selfish and vain efforts of petty people have left behind only scornful mirth and derisive laughter on the vast canvas of eternal time.

*Uṛiche tomār dhvajā megharandhracyuta tapaner jvaladarcirekhā;
Karojōre ceye āchi úrdhvamukhe – paṛite jāni na, kii tāhāte lekhā.*

[Your banner is flying like a beam of sunlight flashing through
the clouds.

I am looking with upturned face and folded hands – but I cannot
read what You have written there.]

This colourful pageant of history, these unknown pictures of the past, the variegated splendour of this theatrical show, are all every moment rising and falling on the bosom of eternity. History is merely giving a gentle blow, a soft vibration of existence, on the solid rock of time. It has been said, Teśām vilakṣāṇo sākṣī [“He is the witness with opposite characteristics”]. Paramashiva, Supreme Consciousness,

is intimately associated with all the various scenes of the acts of history, past, present and future: He is their impartial witness. Though the Supreme Entity is not only a witnessing entity – He is much more than that – still He is the uninvolved witness of all the sequences of events. He does not distort history, nor does He give undue importance to any matter or any entity. He is outside the scope of the law of causation, so He is the witness with “opposite characteristics”⁽²⁾ to all occurrences. His witness-ship does not involve Him in any event – Kleshakarmavipákásháyaeraparámṛśtah Puruśavisheśa Iishvarah [“The special Puruśa who remains unassailed by afflictions, actions, reactions, and saṁskáras, is Iishvara, the Lord”].

So it has been rightly said that this Paramashiva, this Sadáshiva, is the uninvolved witness to all the events of the universe, and because of His impartiality, His unique witness-ship has been symbolized by His third eye.

16 July 1982, Patna

Footnotes

(1) A particular rāga, or melodic scale, in Oriental music. –Trans.

(2) The word vilakśana is used in two senses: one is vipariita lakśana, or “opposite characteristic”; the other is visheśa lakśana, or “special characteristic”. In the Bengali language, the second meaning is used.

Shiva's Teachings – 2 (continued) (Discourse 16)

SHIVOPADESHA 6

*Manasá kalpitá murtih nriám cenmokśasádhanii;
Svapnalabdhená rájyena rájánah manavástathá.*

[If an idol produced out of the human imagination can bring about salvation,
Then can a person, by creating a kingdom in his dreams, become a king in the real sense?]

Mind has primarily two qualities: thinking and recollection. Thoughts are also of various types: first, thoughts regarding the existing environment; second, thoughts regarding the past environment; third, thoughts without any environment; and fourth, fantastic thoughts.

The first category of thoughts relates to the existing environment in which one is living, for instance, the earth, grass, trees and plants, rocks and stones, friends and foes, etc. For instance, when people see a snake at a distance, they forget everything else and start thinking about the snake. When a deer sees a tiger, it thinks only of that tiger; when someone is cooking, that person thinks only of salt, spices, oil, etc. Seated in the examination hall, the students think only about their question papers. These are all thoughts concerning the existing environment.

The second category is the thoughts of the past environment. When a prince falls into difficulty and is compelled to eat stale rice and gourd, then naturally he thinks about the delicious dainties of his royal palace. Those who have spent their childhood in luxury and comfort tend to reminisce about their happy childhood days during the hardships of their later years. A student who once stood first in his class, but who later fails in his examinations, sighs and remembers his achievements of the past. These are thoughts concerning past environments.

The third is thoughts having no environment. When someone is in a very disagreeable situation, passing his days in great misery and suffering, then he paints brightly coloured dreams and launches imaginary balloons in his mental sky. In the dazzling light of the golden pictures of his mental world, his mind starts glittering.

*Raungiin nimeś dhúlár dulál
Paráñe charáy ábiir gulál
Órná óráy shrávañer meghe saiñcaramán nrtya
Háthát álór jhalkáni lege jhalmal kare citta.*

[Colourful moments in the lives of the darling children of the dust
Sprays of coloured powder and rose-water,

Scarves flying through rain-swept clouds in a whirling, twirling dance –
Thrilled by these sudden flashes of light, the mind starts glittering.]

There is still another type of thought which we may call “fantastic thoughts”. The substance of any thought is not divorced from the real world; that is, whatever people see in imagination or think in contemplation, the materials of these thoughts are all collected from the external world. People cannot think of anything which they have not previously seen or perceived with their sense organs. This is the greatest imperfection of the human mind. One of the main qualitative differences between the unit mind and the Cosmic Mind is this: all the thoughts of the Macrocosm are original, each one is constantly new. The Macrocosm does not need to receive anything from the external world through sense organs. Even the minutest fraction of any Cosmic thought is completely novel: Bhávātiita abhinava dehi padam [“O Parama Puruśa who is ever-new and beyond the range of mental cognition, give me shelter at your feet”].

No two human faces are exactly the same, no two entities are identical in any respect. Because of this all-embracing originality of the Macrocosm, there are no identical entities anywhere in this universe. They may be similar, but not identical.

When people mentally combine some part or whole of an entity, with a part or whole of another entity, and then with a part or whole of still another entity – and, by blending all of these component parts, create an altogether new entity in their imagination, this is called “fantastic thought”.

Háns ár sajárú vyákarañ máninā
Haye gela hánsjárú kemane tá jáninā.

[Goose and porcupine, I don’t care about grammar
They become goosepine, I don’t know how.]

While painting pictures, people gather materials from thoughts of the existing environment, from thoughts of the past environment, from thoughts having no environment, or from fantastic thoughts. People resort to fantastic thoughts, or thoughts having no environment, out of fear, or sometimes due to disease, or in the hope of attaining happiness – but mostly to escape easily from the consequences of their misdeeds. Out of fear of tigers people imagined a tiger-god; out of fear of crocodiles, they imagined a crocodile-god; to overcome difficulties in the forest, they imagined a forest-goddess; in hot and humid climates where snakes abound, out of fear of snakes, they imagined a snake-god. These types of imagination, as I have said earlier, mostly arise due to fear or other such propensities.

Greedy people, in the hope or obsession of accumulating more wealth, and that, too, without any hardship, imagine a goddess of wealth. Students who do not want to labour hard to acquire knowledge, imagine a goddess of learning in the hope of easily passing difficult examinations. And instead of sustained individual effort, straightforwardness and utmost sincerity, which are essential to achieve salvation, people cherish the hope of attaining it from various imaginary gods and goddesses by ritualistic worship with easily-obtainable paraphernalia and by chanting a few mantras. All human imagination is based on elements collected from the external world. People cannot think an original thought; that is, they cannot think of anything which does not actually exist in the quinquemental world. Only Parama Puruśa can do so. Hence when people create imaginary idols out of fear, greed, or any other propensity, none of those is original and none has even tñmátrik existence, much less material existence. Had Parama Puruśa conceived of those idols, they would have had physical existence, but in that case also, they would not have had absolute existence, because only Parama Puruśa has absolute existence; other things are merely imaginations of imaginations.⁽¹⁾ Hence in the first part of the shloka it has been said, Manasá kalpitā múrttiḥ [“An idol produced out of the human imagination”].

I said a little while ago that lazy people, to achieve something easily, weave various types of imaginary nets, and spreading their wings over the hard soil of this earth, soar far, far, very far, into the distant blue sky. They do not think that one day they will have to come down to this dusty earth. People seek liberation and salvation in order to gain something in earthly life. Just as people try to gain something easily in the material world by flattery or deceit, they apply the same process to attain liberation or salvation. They do not know, they do not understand, that spiritual salvation is an entirely different matter.

All living beings have minds. Some minds are dormant, some are undeveloped, some are developed, some are highly developed. Human beings possess such highly-developed minds. Yet, however developed or expanded a human mind might be, after all it is still a unit mind; whereas the all-expanded mind of Parama Puruśa is the Cosmic Mind. All the pains and pleasures of human beings come from the unit mind.

*Mana eva manuśyánám káránam bandhamokśayoh;
Bandhastu viśayāsaungi mukto nirviśayam tathā.*

* * *

*Manah karoti karmāni manah lipyate pātakaeh;
Manashca tanmanā bhútvā na puñyāeh na ca pātakaeh.*

[Mind is the cause of human bondage and liberation;
Bondage means attachment to objects, and liberation means freedom from attachment.]

* * *

[It is mind which works and mind which sins –
For the mind which is immersed in the thought of God there is no virtue, no vice.]

It is the mind which carries the burden of pains and pleasures. In the mind is the gloomy black curtain of sorrow, and through this dark curtain pierces the silver light and golden glow of momentary happiness. As long as there are other entities outside the unit mind, there will continue to be sorrows and afflictions, desires, passions and pains. As a result of various types of physical or psychic clashes with other entities, the feelings of pain and pleasure rise and fall like bubbles in the mind. If, through sādhanā, people can merge their unit minds with the Cosmic Mind of Parama Puruśa, then the unit minds themselves become the Cosmic Mind: their individual identities are merged in that Cosmic "I". In that condition, there remains nothing outside. Thus, there is no longer any possibility of physical or psychic clash with any external entity or object. All objects, all ideas, arise out of one's mind. This is the state of liberation – a state of Cosmic bliss far above the domain of mundane pleasures and pains.

The unit consciousness is the witness of the unit mind, but we do not call the unit consciousness the Supreme Cognition, because this unit consciousness is simply a reflection of the Supreme Cognition on the unit mind. When spiritual aspirants totally surrender their all to the Supreme, they merge their unit consciousness into the Cosmic Consciousness with the unflagging speed generated by Tantric blessing.⁽²⁾ That mental state, devoid of saṁkalpa and vikalpa, is the state of mokśa.

As we have explained earlier, the human mind creates various idols from thoughts of the present environment, thoughts of the past environment, thoughts having no environment, and fantastic thoughts. Now, all the movements, gestures and postures of these idols are confined within the scope of the unit mind: when the unit mind so desires, they exist; when it does not, they disappear. That is, their existence depends entirely upon the human mind – they are wholly created by human beings, maintained by human beings, and ultimately will merge into the human mind. So how can they liberate human minds from psychic bondage and establish them in the Macrocosmic stance? Can they free human minds from saṁkalpa and vikalpa and merge the unit consciousness into Supreme Cognition?

It has been said, "When a person creates a kingdom in his dream..." What is a dream? To dream is to think while sleeping. This thinking may also be of four types: of the present environment, of the past environment, without environment, and fantastic.

During sleep these thoughts, in the absence of contact with the hard realities of the external world, appear to be real. Thus people who are not at all affected in the waking state by propensities of fear, anger, etc., may be deeply affected by them during dreams; because, as I said earlier, in the waking state, people know that they are imagining; but during sleep, they do not realize that the play of their imagination is going on. So during that period their dream-thoughts become hard reality for them.

During the time of waking, because there is much resistance from the external reality, there is not much speed of imagination; but during sleep, in the absence of this resistance, there is great acceleration. Within one second people can imagine a vast epic like the Mahābhārata. Sometimes during dreams the dreamers, propelled by such propensities as anger or greed, restlessly move their limbs about. If those moving limbs come in contact with any hard object, the imaginary dream is broken, the dreamer's sleep is disrupted and the dreamy fantasy woven in nets of imagination comes abruptly to an end.

*Svapna yadi madhur eman
Hok se miche kalpanā
Jāgiyo nā āmāy jāgiyo nā.*

[If a dream is so sweet, let it be
A false imagination –
Don't awaken me, don't awaken me.]

When people mentally create a dream kingdom with four imaginary palaces and take their seat on an imaginary throne of gold, in that case they become monarchs in their dream, no doubt, but in reality, are they truly monarchs? Upon awakening they find that they were all along sleeping on a tattered mat with a ragged blanket. Just as becoming the monarch of a kingdom created in the imagination is fantastic and totally false, similarly to expect that idols created by the human imagination can grant liberation and salvation is not only a remote hope but a disappointment from beginning to end. Thus Shiva stated in clear language: svapnalabdhená rájyena rájánah mánavástathá ["can a person, by creating a kingdom in his dreams, become a king in the real sense"]?

SHIVOPADESHA 7

*Mrcchiládhátudárvádimúrttáviishvarobuddhaya;
Klishyantastápasáh jijnánám viná mokśám na yánti te.*

[Those who think that Parama Puruśa is confined within idols made of clay, stone, metal or wood, Are simply torturing their bodies with penances – they will surely not attain salvation without self-knowledge.]

In the previous shloka it was said that people seek to fulfil their aspirations and needs easily by creating idols in their imaginations. But in this shloka it is said that people not only imagine those figures in their minds but also give external shape to those imaginary creations with the help of the five fundamental factors. Sometimes they use clay, sometimes metals like gold or silver, sometimes wood. They spend a great deal of money making these idols and ritually worshipping them. Elaborate arrangements are made to confine Parama Puruśa, who has created each and every entity of this universe, within that clay, stone, metal or wood – to bathe Him, to place Him in a very soft bed, to dress Him in royal apparel for specific festivals, and to prepare special delicacies to please Him. In some places the various items of offering to the deity are sold at exorbitant prices. Then, at night, the deities are placed on their appointed beds, and the doors of the temples are closed. It is then declared that the god is now sleeping. The god is sleeping! Parama Puruśa is asleep! Then how is the administration of the universe continuing? These are deceptions of the imagination: to imagine idols, and then to imagine that the god is asleep! By this false imagination people confine God within idols of clay or stone, metal or wood – and to propitiate these false gods and goddesses, how many hardships people endure, how much wealth they waste on pilgrimages! And what is at the root of all of this? – the far-fetched conceptualization of idols. By ascribing godhood to those idols, people bear so many hardships.

Nothing in this universe happens in vain. Then is it futile to bear hardships for an idol of clay? No, this also is not futile. Suddenly one fine morning, when people realize that these hardships have not the least absolute value, they become vehement opponents of these dogmas. If they do not get the opportunity to speak out against dogma due to circumstantial pressure, they lament internally and pray to Parama Puruśa, "O Lord, I now realize my mistake. Now lead me along Your path."

Rigorous penance does not lead to the least spiritual realization – far less to liberation or salvation. Rather the mind becomes gradually narrower and narrower. The only way to attain salvation is through self-knowledge, and for this one requires pure conduct in the external world, pure thought in the mental world, and whole-hearted surrender to the Supreme Entity – the shelter of all, the one who is hidden in each and every entity – as the polestar of one's life.

*Jagatke sájácchen ye má
Diye kata ratna náná
Tumi sájáte cáo sei máyere
Diye chár dáker gahaná
Jagatke kháoyácchen ye má
Diye kata khádya náná
Tumi kháoyáte cáo sei máyere
Álocál ár búť bhijáná!
Tyajiba sab bhedábhed
Ghuce yábe maner khed
(Omá) shata shata satya Veda
Tará ámár nirákará.*

[The Mother who is adorning this universe with so many jewels –
Do you want to adorn that Mother with a dress of tinsel?
The Mother who is feeding the world with so much food –
Do you want to feed that Mother with sun-dried rice and soaked gram?
I will remove all distinctions, all my mental anguish.
O Má! all the Vedas are true – my goddess Tárá is formless.]

(Here the words “Má” and “Tárá” refer to Brahma.)

In the medieval age many Puranas were composed on the various idols of gods and goddesses. Of all the authors of these Puranas, Vyasadeva is the foremost. He, also, after realizing his mistake in this regard, prayed to Parama Puruśa in these words of apology:

*Rúpaṁ rūpavivarjitasya bhavato yaddhyānena varñitam;
Stutyá'nirvacaniyatá'khilaguro dúriikrtá yanmayá.
Vyápitvaṁ ca nirákrtaṁ Bhagavato yattirthayátrádíná;
Ksántavyaṁ jagadiisho tadvikalatádośátrayaṁ matkrtaṁ.*

[You who are formless, I have given You form, though You can only be realized in meditation – You who are inexpressible, I have limited You by my eulogies– You who are all-pervasive, I have confined You to places of pilgrimage – O Lord, for these three faults of mine, arising due to my mental distortion, please pardon me.]

To the Supreme One, who is the central figure of all existence, of all ideas of the universe, one should offer only one's soul. One should offer one's most favourite object – the quintessence of one's existence. And while offering one should say, Nivedayámi cátmánaṁ tvaṁ gatih Parameshvarah ["O Supreme Lord, I offer myself to You – You are the culmination of the journey of my life"].

The sáadhaná to assimilate the ideation of Parama Puruśa by surrendering one's "I" feeling unto Him, is the sáadhaná of self-knowledge, and one can attain salvation only by this type of sáadhaná.

No one can escape the consequences of his or her actions by resorting to falsehood. This applies not only to the mundane sphere, it applies in the psychic world as well. This is the essence of countless words.

SHIVOPADESHA 8

*Jágratsvapnasusúptyádi caetanyam yad prakáshate;
Tad Brahmáhamiti jñátvá sarvavandhaeh pramucyate.*

[The three states of wakefulness, dream and sleep are expressed by the Supreme Consciousness – One who realizes that That is Brahma, is liberated from all bondages.]

The mind has four states: jágrata [wakefulness], svapna [dream], susúpti [sleep], and turiya [merger in Cosmic Consciousness]. Of these four, the first three are expressed due to the wish of Parama Puruśa. When the unit mind, in its unbounded love for God, merges its individual feeling of existence, all its sweet vibrations, all its rhythmic ideations, in the eternal bliss, in the Supreme Entity, and arrives, temporarily or permanently, at a state of mind without any saṁkalpa or vikalpa, this state of highest wisdom, the state of union with Supreme Cognition, is the state of turiya. The state of turiya is the state of eternal bliss, and thus it has no external expression.

The state of wakefulness means the state of mind in which the conscious mind assimilates, transmits and projects vibrations to and from the external world of the five fundamental factors with the help of the sense and motor organs through the afferent and efferent nerves. Or, in this state the conscious mind may think or recollect something directly through the vibration of the nerve cells without the aid of the sense and motor organs or afferent and efferent nerves.

During the state of wakefulness, at every moment, the external stimuli of human life strike the nerve cells through the afferent and efferent nerves. Sometimes this is pleasurable, sometimes painful. In this state people cannot live even a moment without inferential contact, that is, without the experience of the sweetness or harshness of the material world. Thus in the waking state they think and recollect thoughts which are entirely derived from the vibrations in the nerve cells.⁽³⁾

The influence of the thoughts and recollections derived from the vibrations of the nerve cells is not as great as that of the perceptions of the afferent and efferent nerves. When one's mental concentration is slightly increased, even temporarily, or when the mind becomes slightly introverted, the influence of

the pains and pleasures experienced in the physical world temporarily decreases; and at that time the influence of the thoughts and recollections derived from the vibrations in the nerve cells increases. A person in this condition, by means of a certain process and increased mental force, can temporarily suspend the functioning of another person's afferent and efferent nerves and exert his or her will-power on that other person's nerve cells, movements, thoughts and recollections. This process is called "hypnotism". Dr. Mesmer, a famous psychologist of Europe, invented a therapeutic system to cure diseases with the help of hypnotism. This system is now called "mesmerism".

Of the three expressed states of the human mind, only in the wakeful state is there the maximum utilization of the mind. In this state people can materialize many of their internal thoughts and can do much good to the society and the world at large. To one who has received proper training in life, this state of wakefulness is like a crimson dawn; all people should try to remain in this wakeful state for as long as possible without endangering their health. The assimilation of knowledge from the external world and its implementation in the world, occurs wholly in this waking state. Those who sleep too much, whose eyes are always half-closed in drowsiness, can utilize only a small percentage of their physical and psychic existence. Thus it has been said,

*Śāḍadosāḥ puruṣēṇeha hāntavyāḥ bhūtimicchatā;
Nidrā tandrā bhayaṁ krodha ālasyaṁ diirghasūtratā.*

"Those who want to develop in life must destroy these six defects in themselves: nidrā [sleep], tandra [drowsiness], ālasya [lethargy], bhaya [fear], krodha [anger], and diirghasūtratā [procrastination]."

The wakeful state in human beings is expressed because of the wish of Parama Puruṣa, because of His grace; people have no right to boast about it.

I said a little while ago that dreaming means thinking or recollecting during sleep. Now the first question that arises is this: Why do people not always think or recollect during sleep? During the wakeful state, people are always thinking or recollecting. Even when people meditate in the wakeful state, they are thinking of, or recollecting, Supreme Consciousness. In the waking state, the mind never remains inactive. Then why does it not always dream during sleep?

The answer is, the sleeping state means a state of rest for the mind. But if, before or at the time of sleep, one is tormented with deep sorrow, or becomes overjoyed with extreme happiness, or is afflicted with a serious disease, or is brooding over imaginary pains and pleasures – then during sleep if the gases in the body rise and create vibrations in the nerve cells, one starts thinking and recollecting. That is why people do not always dream during every sleep.⁽⁴⁾

Very often, whenever there is concentration of mind for any reason, during sleep vibrational waves from the all-knowing unconscious mind stimulate the nerve cells, and the dreamer gets the answer to questions which were haunting his or her mind. But these answers can never be received during the state of disjointed thinking. One thing more should be remembered in this regard, that the answers from the unconscious mind, the repository of all knowledge, are received primarily during dream and only secondarily during the wakeful state; but much of the knowledge thus gained during dream is immediately forgotten as soon as the dream is over. On rare occasions, a little of that knowledge lingers in the mind even after arising from sleep.

Although the knowledge from the unconscious mind flows down to the subconscious only secondarily during the wakeful state, when it does flow down, in most cases it remains well-imprinted in the subconscious mind and thus easily enters the conscious mind from the subconscious.

Many diseased or distressed persons, in order to gain the solutions for their sorrows, prostrate before the idols in the temples. In this situation, they are constantly thinking of their diseases and the remedies of their sufferings and the ways to remove them. This ultimately leads to the temporary concentration of the mind. When, after remaining in this state of concentration for a while, their minds ultimately become benumbed, then from the all-knowing unconscious mind the sought-after solution penetrates into their subconscious. Since such a state is a state neither of wakefulness nor of sleep nor of dream, the answer can easily penetrate the subconscious mind, and from the subconscious enter the conscious. People may think that the remedy to their distress was the boon of such-and-such god or goddess, but this was not actually the case at all.

Normally the temporary or permanent concentration of mind occurs as a result of one of five mental processes: kṣīpta [restlessness],⁽⁵⁾ mūdha [attachment], vikṣīpta [scattered thinking], ekāgratā [concentration], and nirodha [mental suspension].

Those who are lying before the idols are receiving the solution to their problems from their unconscious minds into their subconscious minds as a result of their temporary ekágratá, mental concentration.

The state of dream is a very peculiar state. Although in ninety-five per cent of the cases, dreams do not come true, in five per cent they do. During dreams a beggar lying on tattered rags becomes a king, while a king becomes a beggar, lying on his dusty bed. In dreams, people cry out in unbearable agony, and in dreams they are transported in the joy of attaining everything they desire.

*Kál ráter svapne ámi
Ádho álo jochanáy
Se ek notun desh
Dekhechigo niráláy;
Sethá kon phul phote go
Sethá kusume náhiko kárítá
Bala kon chánd othe go
Sethá jibane náhiko bháritá
Sethá phuler kánane kusuma kalirá
Kabhu náhi muracháy
Dekhechigo dekhchigo niráláy.*

[Last night in dream
I saw a new land
In the dim half-light of the moon,
A solitary realm;
I wonder what flowers bloom there,
And what moon glows in that sky –
There the flowers have no thorns,
There life's flow has no ebb,
There the buds never wither –
I had a dream of such a solitary land.]

That person's life is successful who dreams about Parama Puruśa:

*Svapne táre dekhechinu
Svapne hálo paricay
Svapne bhála besechinu
Dekhechinu premamay.*

[I saw Him in a dream
In dream I made His acquaintance,
In dream I loved Him,
I called to Him, "O Lord full of love."]

In the lives of many people, a time may come when their days are full of the thorns of miseries, but at night, during dream, they transcend their pains and pleasures. Then, meeting their Íśta in dream, they beam with joy and laughter in the ocean of bliss. All the sufferings and sorrows of their lives, great or small, merge into that indescribable ocean of bliss. Those who experience this type of dream are truly fortunate. It is they who can say,

*Cokhe dekhá pái náko
Dekhá hay mane mane
Se milan sundara
Sakala duhkahara
Svapne bāñciyá tháki
Bhule tháki jágarañe.*

[I do not see Him with my eyes,
I see Him in my mind;
In that beautiful meeting,
All sorrows disappear;
In dream I am alive –
In waking, I forget.]

Even in the waking state their lives are drenched in the drowsy sweetness of that dreamy atmosphere, and then in their lives, that dream becomes a reality. As a result, the waking state for them becomes meaningless.

Then cannot those dreamy persons do any good to the society? Yes, certainly they can, and in a better way. This state of drowsiness is not dullness or crudeness; rather it is the golden opportunity to fully utilize one's existence by touching the feet of Táraka Brahma, as long as there is life.

The human propensities that operate in the mundane sphere are five in number: áhár [food], nidrá [sleep], bhaya [fear], maethuna [begetting progeny] and dharma sádhaná [spiritual practice]. Of these five, only the first four play a part in the lives of animals. The peculiar nature of these five propensities is this: if they are given indulgence, they increase. And they easily come under control with a slight effort; only in the initial stage, one must struggle a little to control them.

Of these propensities, the first four are primarily physical and secondarily mental, and the fifth one is equally physical, mental and spiritual. The amount of the first four required for physical and mental health is minimal; but the need of the fifth, dharma sádhaná, is unlimited – the more the better. If the need for any of the first four is channelled into the fifth, then so much the better, there may no longer be any necessity for that propensity at all.

Yes, we were discussing sleep. After labouring beyond a certain point in the wakeful state, one's nerve fibres become exhausted and one feels the need to rest. In the wakeful state, as the nerve cells are constantly performing the functions of thinking and recollecting, they become fatigued. Thus for psychic and physical health, one needs to sleep – the exhausted nerve cells and fibres will fall into sleep of their own accord. The nerve cells of those who do physical labour become extremely exhausted, and that is why the moment they go to bed they immediately fall asleep.

Those who do a lot of mental labour combined with a little physical labour, also fall asleep immediately upon going to bed, due to the tiredness of their nerve cells. But those who perform some mental labour, but proportionately less labour of the nerve fibres [that is, physical labour], suffer from insomnia. They use various types of drugs and injections to induce sleep by forcing the nerve cells and nerve fibres to stop functioning. So it can be imagined how dangerous and harmful is the effect of those drugs and injections.

Getting the amount of sleep necessary to maintain physical and mental health should not be criticized. But as with any of the four vrttis, if sleep is encouraged, people can spend twenty-three out of the twenty-four hours of their day in sleep. This kind of sleep is as bad as death. Human beings have come onto this earth to do some work. Now if they spend most of their time in sleep, when will they work? If a major portion of life is spent only in sleep, is that not another name for death?

*Jiṇānashāstravinodena kálām gacchati dhiimatām;
Vyasanena ca mūrkhānām nidrayā kalahena vā.*

[Intelligent people spend their time studying books of knowledge;
Whereas fools waste their time in useless pastimes, sleep and quarrels.]

Human beings want to emerge from the dark chasms of sleep and death into the world of light – golden flashes of light piercing the heart of darkness. That golden light is a dynamic and spirited life, which people can enjoy only in the waking state.

Those who are experiencing all the pulsations of life, who are throbbing with pains and pleasures, hopes and disappointments, why should they say,

*Ámi ándháre bendhechi ghar
Álor desher páre
Cháyá diye gherá se ye
Marañ nadiir dháre;
Nái thikáná kúl-kinará
Cálte giye dishehárá
Ándhár ráter ánágoná
Path kii shudháí yáre táre.*

[I have built my house in darkness
On the other side of the world of light,
Covered with shadow, beside the river of death.
No address, no arrival –

Going there, people lose their way.
The dark night comes and goes –
Whom should I ask where to find the path?]

It is due to Parama Puruśa that all these three states, waking, dreaming, and sleeping, are manifested; due to His existence the minds of human beings enter the states of wakefulness, dream, sleep and turiya. All these states are gifts of His grace – the blessings of His blissful play. The slightest expression of His grace gives rise to the feelings of existence of all creatures – due to His blessing the entire universe from Brahmá, the Cosmic Creator, to a blade of grass, is billowing and swinging in endless waves. When people attain self-realization in sádhana, then they realize, “O Parama Puruśa, You are vast, You are unfathomable – and I am small and insignificant. But I am a small fraction of Your immeasurable limitlessness, and I will completely surrender to You all the feelings of saṁkalpa and vikalpa of my mind and totally obliterate the distinctions between ‘I’ and ‘You’.” When these distinctions of “I” and “You” are dissolved, people become liberated from all bondages.

From how many bondages human beings suffer! Human bondages are chiefly of three types: physical, mental and spiritual. But when, remembering Parama Puruśa, they surrender all the sweetness of their existences to Him, then and only then can they attain permanent liberation from those three bondages. Shiva says, “In this state, shattering all bondages, they attain the supreme stance of eternal bliss.”

22 July 1982, Patna

Footnotes

- (1) Human beings are the imagination of Parama Puruśa, and idols are the imagination of human beings, so idols are “imaginings of imaginings”. –Trans.
- (2) Tantric abhiśeka, a boon of rapid spiritual progress conferred by a Tantric guru. –Trans.
- (3) That is, from the stored sensations of the material world. –Trans.
- (4) That is, they dream only when the aforesaid conditions are fulfilled. –Trans.
- (5) Kśipta is a restless, distracted state when too many vṛttis operate in the mind. –Trans.

Shivas Teachings – 2 (continued) (Discourse 17)

SHIVOPADESHA 9

*Ātmajijñānamidaṁ Devi param mokśaekasádhanaṁ;
Sukṛtaermánava bhútvá jijñāniicenmokśamápnuyát.*

[Self-knowledge, Párvatī, is the greatest means to attain salvation.

People are born as human beings due to their past good saṁskáras, but to attain non-qualified liberation they will have to attain self-knowledge.]

In the older days, Párvatī was the symbolic representation of all the spiritual questions of human beings. Párvatī, as a representative of humanity, would ask Sadáshiva all the eternal questions of the human mind. Shiva’s answers to these queries are indeed the lovely jewels of all ages. Párvatī’s queries, too, are so beautiful that hearing them, learned people think, “Indeed, this is also my question.” That is why her questions have been arranged in perfect order, and are collectively known as nigama shástra. This nigama shástra is a collection of spiritual questions of a very high order. Although Shiva’s answers are very illuminating in their brilliant philosophical exposition, their practical value far exceeds their philosophical value. Indeed, Shiva’s philosophical explanations are more illuminating because of their practical value.

In Tantra, the nigama, that is, the collection of Párvatī’s questions, and the ágama, the compilation of Shiva’s answers, have been compared to the two wings of a swan. A bird cannot fly on one wing; similarly, Tantra philosophy, with its nigama and ágama, is complete. If one of the aspects is excluded, the inner essence of Tantra is jeopardized.

In this shloka, Shiva answers Párvatī’s question:

“The only way to attain salvation is to acquire self-knowledge through proper practice.” Regarding self-knowledge, it has already been discussed in great detail.⁽¹⁾ Here Shiva has said that to attain mokśa

without acquiring self-knowledge is an impossibility. Some people may argue that to attain self-knowledge, the path of devotion is the best. But here the term bhakti has not been used, because in the early days of the Shiva cult, the word bhakti was not used in the realm of intuitional practice, it began to be used only in later days. We come across a reference to the term bhakti in one of the significant observations pertaining to the path of meditation: Mokśakāraṇasamagryām bhaktireva gariyasii ["Of all the ways to attain salvation, bhakti is the greatest"]. This observation is about 1500 years old, that is, long after Shiva's time.

Here Shiva says, self-knowledge is the path of attaining salvation. It has also been explained very clearly that for self-knowledge, intense sādhanā and utmost sincerity are essential. It has also been said that only by moving towards the Supreme One, leaving all other entities, and totally surrendering oneself with all the sweetness of life emanating from the deepest recesses of the heart into the infinite sweetness of Paramashiva – only in this way can one attain the supreme benevolence – and then only can one attain self-knowledge. What could be a deeper and sweeter interpretation of devotion than this?

Now the question is – who can achieve this? Who is eligible for this self-knowledge? Shiva could not accept any discrimination on the basis of caste, community or colour. So how did he determine one's eligibility? Shiva declared that when people attain human status as a result of their noble virtues of lives together, then they are considered eligible to attain self-knowledge.

Here a question may arise: While in the process of pratisaiṅcara [the introversive phase of creation], various creatures will, by natural course, attain the stage of humanity. So what is meant by attaining human life as a result of past lives?

The fact is that the creatures advance, in the flow of pratisaiṅcara, along a systematic path. Human beings are just the most evolved creatures, but those human beings who are just evolving from animal life are still very near the borderline between animal and human life. So although they have human bodies, their thoughts, recollections and behaviour remain similar to those of animals to some extent; their existence is full of animal propensities, they have little spiritual awareness, and they are propelled mostly by lower propensities. They do not want to hear good words; even if they hear they do not want to understand; and even if they want to understand, they cannot.

These types of people, although human in form, are not fully human in matter of intellect: they are still in the subhuman stratum. Out of their ignorance they say, "Dharma is opium, one can live without dharma." They do not consider anything to be sin. They are mainly obsessed with their individual and group interests. They possess only a small fraction of human qualities because they are not sufficiently intellectually developed to possess higher human qualities. These types of people gradually acquire virtues due to their good deeds over their lives, and ultimately become mentally developed and mentally balanced.

These mentally-developed and mentally-balanced people are entitled to self-realization, whatever their intellectual attainment by worldly standards. Some of them, because of their acquired merit over their lives, attain a high degree of spirituality right from their youth. Shiva has rightly said, "One whose existence is truly blessed with virtues acquired through noble deeds, is entitled to self-knowledge. And to attain self-knowledge means to attain salvation: because, with the attainment of self-knowledge, human beings attain permanent liberation from the triple bondages. This permanent liberation is mokśa."

SHIVOPADESHA 10

*Ātmasthitāṁ Shivaṁ tyaktvā vahisthaṁ yah samarcayet;
Hastasthaṁ piṇḍamutsrjya bhramate jīvitāśhayā.*

– Shiva Saṁhitā

[One who looks for Shiva in the external world, ignoring the Shiva of the internal world, Is like one who throws away the rice that is in one's hand and wanders from door to door in search of one's livelihood.]

In the universe, under no circumstances was anyone alone, is anyone alone, or will anyone be alone. All the entities lying within the Cosmic bosom from beginning to end are moving, and the touch of Parama Puruṣa's hand – the Supreme Controller, who is stronger than even the thunderbolt – is upon them all. On the one hand, in His prota-yoga, He is associated with all entities of all lokas [worlds] and all spheres; and on the other, in His ota-yoga, He is shining like a bright jewel in the most solitary corners of the minds of all creatures.

The sky of the external world is glittering with His light and the sky of the inner world is also gleaming with His effulgence.

*Na tatra súryo bháti na candratáarakám;
Nemá vidyuto bhánti kuto'yamagnih.
Tadeva bhántamanubháti sarvaám;
Tasya bhásá sarvamidaám vibháti.*

"He who illumines the external world, illumines all the stars and planets also. Besides Parama Puruśa, no other entity has light of its own. The light of all other entities is the mere reflection of His effulgence. Compared to that supreme source of effulgence, even the sun is enveloped in darkness – the shining face of the moon is covered with a black veil – the flashes of lightning are lost in the blinding darkness – what to speak of the glow of fire! All are lighted with His light; with His radiance, all others are radiant, and in His effulgence all others become blessed." To this Supreme Entity, this Parama Puruśa, no one is negligible, no one is abominable. He is the focal point of all existence – He is the most resplendent entity of all. To make His dear children dance in joy and overflowing delight, He leads them to the highest attainment. Concealing Himself in all, He plays hide-and-seek with His little children:

*Brhacca taddivyamacintyarúpaám súksmácca tat súksmataram vibháti,
Dúrat sudúre tadihántike ca pashyatshivaeva nihitaám guháyám.*

[That vast, unfathomable divine form – subtler than the subtlest,
Farther than the farthest, nearer than the nearest – one can only see Him hidden in the cave of one's heart.]

"One need not run about in the world to find Him who is contained within the jewel-case of one's existential feeling. One can easily attain Him if only one searches within."

To forget the brightest jewel of the inner world and then vainly search for the source of light in the outer world – this is indeed a waste of time! Shiva says, Why should people waste their time in this way? Why should people throw the food from their hands and then beg for alms from door to door? His advice is: proceed towards the inner world... deeper... still deeper... and still deeper.

SHIVOPADESHA 11

*Idaám tiirthamidaám tiirthaám bhramanti támasáh janáh;
Átmatirthaám na jánanti kathaám mokśa baránane.*

[Here is one place of pilgrimage, there is another place. People of static nature wander from the one place to the other place.

But without finding the real place of pilgrimage within their hearts, how can they attain salvation?]

People in general have an irresistible attraction towards tiirtha [a place of pilgrimage]. Women are ready to sell their favourite ornaments and utensils to meet the expenses of a pilgrimage, and many people are even ready to sell their landed properties for that purpose. Those who do not even have the strength to walk, travel by palanquins, and those who have defective eyesight go on pilgrimages with towels tied around their waists, pulled along by priests! If the priests show them the shell of a dead snail and tell them that it is an idol of Náráyaṇa, the people believe it, and with clothes around their necks [as a sign of homage] prostrate themselves before the so-called idol.

People have been feeling this irresistible attraction towards pilgrimage since the time when the idea of God first sprouted in their minds, but naturally now the question arises, what is this tiirtha? The word tiirtha means "a place of pilgrimage". Tiira + sthá + áda = tiirastha [tiirtha]. Tiira means the shoreline, where the land and water touch each other. The sloping portion of the land which comes in contact with this tiira is called the beach. If a person takes one step from the shoreline towards the beach one will reach the dry land, and if a person takes one step towards the water, then one will enter the water. The tiirtha, which really means a place between the physical and spiritual worlds, is analogous to this geographical tiira.

For if a person takes one step towards worldliness, one is likely to be entangled in all sorts of worldly allurements, and if one takes a step towards the "water of spirituality," one will be carried away by its current. That very point, which is the connecting link between worldliness and spirituality, is tiirtha: Tiirasthaám tiirthamityáhu.

People generally want to live without intense sádhaná in the spiritual sphere and without much effort in the mundane sphere. When people seek to acquire fortune or attain salvation without proper effort, then they try to remove their sins by visiting the so-called holy places of pilgrimage – they try to escape across the Baetaráii [Styx] by holding the tails of calves! The merchants in those holy places understand this mental weakness of the people, and by taking advantage of it, exploit them to the utmost. As a result, the pilgrims are unable to worship as they should, and are misguided into moving from one place to another by these exploiters. But this does not satisfy their spiritual hunger, and they feel they have not at all been relieved of their sins. Thus people of static mentality waste their valuable time, energy and money rushing from one place of pilgrimage to another.

Then what is the real tirtha, and where is it situated? The golden line of the human heart whence saṁkalpa and vikalpa have originated and where they touch each other in sweet spiritual bliss – that is the real tirtha. One who remains at this common point is called tīrastha or tirtha – there the person and the presiding Lord of the holy place become one. Those who forget the Lord of the holy place, that ever-wakeful One in perpetual tranquillity like an eternal, unflickering flame of light in the deepest recesses of their hearts – those who wander here and there in the mundane world in search of a holy place – can they attain salvation? Shiva answers Párvatī, “No, this type of person cannot attain salvation.”

SHIVOPADESHA 12

*Mayyeva sakalam jātam mayi sarvaṁ pratiśṭhitam;
Mayi sarvaṁ layam yāti tad Brahmādvayamasmyaham.*

[Everything is born out of Me, everything is maintained in Me;
Everything finally merges in Me; I am that Brahma – One without a second.]

Shiva, the embodiment of Supreme Consciousness, says, “The Nucleus of Parama Puruśa is the nucleus of this universe,” that is, the nucleus of His vast body. All entities have emanated from the Cosmic Nucleus and, after rotating within the Cosmic body for ages, with their respective rhythms and saṁskāras, will ultimately merge back in their source of origin. This supreme source, the Universal Hub, is Puruśottama. It is not enough to say that all the entities are emerging from this Nucleus, from this original source of all existence; indeed, the vitality of this circumvolution within the vast body of Parama Puruśa – its rhythms in time – this too is derived from that Cosmic Nucleus. That is, this Nucleus is not only the source of emanation but also the singular motivating force behind all potential expression. It is just like a boy flying a kite – in the first stage he releases the well-waxed string from the reel, and then for a long time he flies the kite in the sky, applying all his tricks. The kite thinks, “I am free – no one can stop me. By unfolding my wings however I please, I can fly towards the blue horizon of the distant void.” Then suddenly the kite feels a jerk and, pulled by the reel, is drawn towards the reel itself.

Sadāshiva says, “Whatever exists has emanated out of Me; everything is being maintained in Me; everything is playing within My vast body.” Some know this, some do not know, while others want to remain oblivious of the fact. How can created beings go outside Him, beyond whom there is no time, place or person? So all entities have to move, walk, run and jump within the vast body of the Creator.

Those who have simplicity, straightforwardness and moral courage say, beating their breasts, “I have taken shelter on the vast lap of the infinite Parama Puruśa. Besides this I have no other shelter.” Those who are timid or cowardly, those whose tongues become inert when they utter the truth, say, “I disown Him in whose loving shelter I have been raised throughout my infancy, childhood and youth.” But Shiva says, “My loving children always were and are, and will always remain on my lap, under all circumstances. However sinful, however vile, however arrogant, however filled with the pride of superiority, I cannot keep them away from my lap. Mayi sarvaṁ layam yāti [everything will merge in Me].”

Shiva further says, “When all worldly activities are finished, all entities, with their life-force derived from Me, will return to their point of origin to merge in Me, to become one with Me. Then their feelings of duality come to a blissful end.” Shiva, the embodiment of Consciousness, says, “This creation of living beings, the sweet existence of all creatures, their vibrant urges for action, their busy activity, and their final blissful, tranquil rest – all these are happening around Me as the Nucleus. I am that Brahma-without-a-Second, that Singular Entity.” Why is He called the One-without-a-Second? In this universe Parama Puruśa is the Singular Entity. There is no such thing as duality. When a person attains salvation by the grace of Parama Puruśa in sádhaná all duality disappears. He only loses his small “I” and nothing else. His pettiness, centring around his small “I”, is transformed into vastness. Each and every entity has

a small "I" of its own, but for all entities, the great "I" is one. In the small "I" there is duality; but not in the great "I". So the great "I" is non-dual, singular.

When one attains salvation, one's small "I" merges into the great "I" of the vast Puruśa. Originating from the mountain caves, crossing countless valleys and green and golden plains, the mountain river finally merges with the blue waters of the sea. Does that river really die? No, it does not die. There is no permanent death of any entity. The rhythmic sweetness of rivers lives eternally in the surging waves of the vast oceans. Although people know this, they want to forget it. And because they remain oblivious to this fact, they become overwhelmed with sorrow. In fact, all entities are living eternally in supreme blessedness within the vast bosom of the Supreme Entity, from the state of beginninglessness to the state of endlessness. Nothing is lost, nothing was lost, nothing will ever be lost.

30 July 1982, Patna

Footnotes

(1) Discourse 12, Shivopadesha 2. –Trans.

Shiva in the Light of Philosophy (Discourse 17 (continued))

1

I said at the beginning that there was no script during the time of Shiva. There was an alphabet but no script. What a strange situation! People had to learn the alphabet by pronouncing it. There were sixteen vowels and thirty-four consonants, a total of fifty letters. Everything had to be learned by hearing it from the masters, and along with the proper pronunciation, everything had to be memorized.

Long after Shiva's time, about six thousand years ago, pictorial script was first developed in China, and almost the same time or a little later, Dravidian pictorial script or Saendhavii script (Mahenjadáro script) came into existence in India. In later periods the ancient pictorial script of China underwent great transformation and took the form of the modern script, and the ancient Dravidian pictorial script of India, through gradual metamorphosis, took the form of letters (that is, of the Bráhmii and Kharośthii scripts). This ancient Indian alphabetic script was in use throughout West and South Asia, Tibet, Sri Lanka and all of Southeast Asia. Chinese pictorial script was in use in Siberia, Mongolia, Outer Mongolia, Korea, Japan, Taiwan and the Okinawa group of islands.

Long before Shiva, the Vedas came into being. There are six related limbs of the Vedas – chanda, kalpa, vyákaraṇa, nirukta, jyotiśa and áyurveda (also called dhanurveda). Though these treatises are not as ancient as the Rgveda, they are quite old, and existed before the time of Shiva. That is, even though there was no alphabet at the time of Shiva, there were quite a few scriptures, which were learned by hearing them from the guru's mouth and were preserved very carefully by committing them to memory. Because the existence of all these scriptures depended on people's memory power, it was very difficult for a single scholar to be an authority on more than one scripture. So the people who were well-versed in more than one scripture were highly esteemed, and those who were authorities in all six limbs of the Vedas – chanda, kalpa, vyákaraṇa, etc. – were honoured with the title of śádaungii.⁽¹⁾ Those who were adept in one Veda – who had committed the whole Veda to memory – were known as páńdeya ([modern surname] Pande); those who could memorize two Vedas were known as dvivedii (Dube); those who could memorize three Vedas were known as trivedii (Tiwari); those who were able to remember all four Vedas were called caturvedii (Chaube). It is to be remembered that the division of the Vedas into Rk, Yaju and Atharva⁽²⁾ arose only after script came into existence.

In those days there were many interpreters and commentators who could not themselves commit any Veda or scripture to memory but could explain it after hearing it from those who had memorized it but could neither understand nor explain it themselves. This is why in those days people used to say, Ávrttiḥ sarvashástráńám bodhádapi gariiyasii ["The recitation of all the scriptures is better than the understanding of them"].

Whatever might be the number of shástras – needless to say, all were unwritten – in existence at the time of Shiva, there was no such thing as darshana shástra. Maharshi Kapila wrote darshana shástra for the first time; by that time alphabetical script had been invented. People were charmed by his erudition and almost all the scholars of the society venerated him as the first exponent of darshana shástra, and called him ádividván [first scholar]. This erudite personality of Rárh enumerated the fundamental causes of the mystery of this creation and presented them in a systematic way before the society of scholars.

The perennial questions confronting humanity are: What is this universe? What is a living being? What is God? What is the relation between living beings and the universe, between God and living beings, between God and the universe?

*Má go ámár ei bhávaná
Ámi kotháy chilám, kotháy elám
Kotháy yába náí thikáná.*

[Oh Mother, this is the only thought in my mind: Where was I? Where am I now? Where shall I go? I know nothing about these matters.]

It is not an easy task to answer these perennial questions satisfactorily. Maharshi Kapila enumerated certain fundamental causes obtained by an intensive analysis of various facts and factors, and then said, "Living beings and the universe must be considered on the basis of this enumeration of fundamental causes." He did not clearly say anything about God, but he considered the idea that one entity is controlling everything, and said that the existence of a single controller may be accepted, and that controller may be termed Janya Ishvara. What to speak of thoroughly explaining the relationship of the universe and the living being with this Janya Ishvara, he did not even make any superficial observation. Since Ishvara could not be experienced directly, Maharshi Kapila did not clearly accept His existence. He proclaimed that átmá [soul], or puruśa [consciousness], is present in every living being, and so there are innumerable puruśas. But there is only one Primordial Prakrti, and this Primordial Prakrti is the main cause of the creation of this universe. Hers is the predominant role. That is why in Sámkhya, another name of Prakrti is Pradhána [the Predominant].

This is how he established the relationship between Prakrti and this universe. He recognized the existence of puruśa, or átmá, in every unit entity, but the concept of Ishvara remained unexplained. People can be liberated from bondages with the help of sádhaná, and these liberated persons are called mukta puruśa [liberated souls]. Even after the attainment of liberation, the puruśas remain separated from each other – that is, the plurality of puruśas remains unaffected. Kapila did not clearly explain the concept of liberation; although he said something about the saṁkalpa and vikalpa of the human mind, he did not explain it explicitly enough to give people a clear idea of the concept of liberation or salvation.

Shiva was a tremendous personality; it is impossible to explain such a great personality within the scope of Sámkhya philosophy. There is a clear difference between Shiva's teachings and the assertions of Sámkhya philosophy. Shiva has clearly stated that this universe originated from a conscious Entity; it is maintained in the vast body of that conscious Entity; and it will finally merge again in that conscious Entity. Shiva's greatness overwhelmed the váda, jalpa and vitaṇḍá⁽³⁾ of the Sámkhya philosophy.

The basic foundation of a comprehensive philosophy rests on váda, jalpa and vitaṇḍá. If the foundation is not sufficiently strong, the duration of the philosophy's existence is not long. The Sámkhya philosophy defeated many later schools of philosophy by marshalling many arguments with the help of its intricate weapons of váda-jalpa-vitaṇḍá, and continues to do so even today. But the propounders of this philosophy were so overwhelmed by the greatness of Shiva and the radiance of His personality, though much older than themselves, that they could not give any idea of Shiva to humanity. Their own eyes were dazzled.

I was referring to the three weapons of philosophy – váda, jalpa and vitaṇḍá. One of those is váda, to strengthen one's position through logic; the second is jalpa, to demolish the structures of the other philosophy or doctrine through logic; and the third, vitaṇḍá, is to capture the zone of intellectual influence of the defeated philosophy. Sámkhya philosophy possessed all three of the weapons of logic. But the Sámkhya philosophy avoided the great practical personality of Shiva.

Now it is ridiculous to compare Párvatī with the Prakrti of Sámkhya philosophy, because Shiva is not to be considered as one of the innumerable puruśas. It is like:

*Tomáre páche sahaje bujhi táí ki eta liilár chal!
Báhire yabe hásir chatá bhítare tháke cokher jal.
Bujhi go ámi bujhi go taba chalaná,
Ye kathá tumi balíte cáo se kathá tumi bala ná.
Tomáre páche sahaje dhari, kichuri taba kinará náí,
Dasher dale pheli go páche vimukha tumi, virúpa tai?
Bujhi go ámi, bujhi go taba chalaná,
Ye pathe tumi calíte cáo se pathe tumi cala ná.
Sabár ceye adhik cáha, táí ki tumi phiriyá yáo,*

*Helár bháre khelár mata bhikśájhuli bhásáye dáo.
Bujhechi ámi bujhechi taba chalaná,
Sabár yáhe trpti hala, tomár táhe hala ná.*

[Lest we should understand you easily, You elude us through so many pretenses!
While externally people beam, inside there are tears.
Yes, I understand, surely I understand Your pretenses.
You don't say what You really mean;
Lest we should understand You easily, You have made Yourself limitless.
Are You angry with us because we have counted You as one of the many?
Yes, I understand, surely I understand Your pretenses.
You don't walk along the path on which You pretend to,
You demand more than anyone: is that why You go away unsatisfied?
You throw away Your beggar's bag as if it were a plaything;
Yes, I understand, surely I understand Your pretenses –
When everyone else is satisfied, You are still unsatisfied.]

The beggar's bag will not be filled up. This beggar does not approach anyone for anything; He wants the person, not the alms. It will never be proper to compare this unique personality with one of the many puruśas of Sámkhya. No, whether or not this puruśa becomes angry or annoyed at such comparisons and if He does indeed become annoyed, how His anger is expressed – this will be discussed later.

2

Long after the Sámkhya philosophy was propounded, another great philosopher was born in Rárh – Maharshi Patanjali. He took special care to correct some of the basic defects of the Sámkhya philosophy, but in some matters he lagged behind. His school of philosophy, which is popularly known as Pátaiñjala Yoga, Yoga Sútram or Seshvara Sámkhya, is an eloquent testimony to his high degree of intellect and erudition. Some aspects of the philosophy were explained in a very psychological way, but it lacked the detailed analysis of Kapila's Sámkhya. Another positive aspect of Patanjali's philosophy was that it accepted the existence of the all-controlling Iishvara and provided spiritual aspirants valuable guidelines for their intuitional practice. But a most glaring defect was that it failed to demarcate the relation between the jīvas [living beings] and Iishvara, the Supreme Controller of the universe. Moreover, it did not explain clearly and conclusively how Iishvara exercises His supreme authority in controlling the universe, nor why people should practise yoga, why they should try to suspend all their psychic propensities, etc.

Thus the fundamental difference between Shiva and the Iishvara of Patanjali's philosophy is obvious. Shiva looked upon all the living beings of the universe as His loving children. He raised them with loving care and, at the end of their physical existence, pulled them onto His affectionate lap. Not even a hint of the glory and sweetness of Shiva's ideology can be found in the Pátaiñjala philosophy. Pátaiñjala Yoga is a dull and dry school of yogic discipline; it does not make the yogi's heart ever-fresh and ever-green. And unless the heart of a yogi is fresh and tender, the seed of devotion, although sown in time, does not sprout. Without that blissful flow of devotion which vibrates and inspires living beings to attain the highest spiritual realization, the Pátaiñjala school of philosophy could not create a large group of devotees, a Hariparimañdala [circle of people around the Lord].

Not only the gods are fond of the fragrance of flowers; devotees also want to string garlands for their beloved Íśta with the fragrant flowers of the devotion of their hearts. If a flower has no fragrance, it has no value for a devotee. One should remember that the fragrance of a flower and the tender sweetness of a devotional heart together make a perfect combination. What does the perfume of the flower represent? The worldly activity which a devotee does with a heart filled with love is the perfume of the flower, and the overflowing devotion for one's Íśta is the tender sweetness in the devotee's heart. With these two together, the devotee makes a garland. Now, if there are fragrant flowers, but there is no sweetness in the devotee's heart, then the devotee cannot make a garland for his or her Íśta – then there is no question of garlanding Him at all, and though the flower basket may be full of flowers, they wither with the pain of emptiness and the agony of unfulfilled yearning. Then if the Beloved does not accept the garland, what is the use of holding the basket full of flowers and crying –

*Bhará sáji ki go
He mor Devatá
Emni bhariyá rabe.*

[O beloved Lord,
Will my basket of flowers
Ever remain full?]

The Pátainjala philosophy may have accepted Shiva as Iishvara, but certainly did not accept Him as the Lord of the heart. This was indeed a great injustice to Shiva, because He was the Supreme Lord of the human heart. The glory of Shiva is not properly reflected in the light of Pátainjala Yoga philosophy. How, indeed, can it be reflected? Compared to the dazzling brilliance of Shiva's effulgence, the dim light of the Pátainjala philosophy is fainter than that of a glow-worm.

30 July 1982, Patna

Footnotes

(1) Literally, "six-limbed"; one who is expert in all six limbs of the Vedas. From this comes the modern surname Sarangi. –Trans.

(2) Sámaveda is not a recognized Veda. The compilation of the musical portions of all the Vedas is known as Sámaveda. Here sáma means "song".

(3) The three steps of Sámkhya logic. –Trans.

Shiva in the Light of Philosophy (continued) (Discourse 18)

3

Maharshi Kanada created a stir in the world of philosophy by propagating his school of Vaesheśika Darshana. It was indeed a great commotion in the world of thought of those days. He declared, Karañabhávát káryabhávah – "Where there is no cause, there is no effect." That is, each and every effect has a cause, which we may or may not know. He explained that this Cosmic Mind which is manifested in the form of countless molecules, atoms, protons, neutrons, etc., must have a cause – to deny the cause is the height of intellectual folly. That Entity which controls the association of these particles is Iishvara. Thus Maharshi Kanada brought about a great revolution in the world of thought. This great scholar of Gándhárbhúmi (the present-day Afghanistan) was both a philosopher and a scientist.

There is no doubt that the theory of the law of causation was an extremely novel idea in the world of philosophy of those days, but it is also true that we must trace the source of the first effect, that is, trace the first cause, in the process of causation.

The Vaesheśika school of philosophy has accepted Iishvara in clear terms. So if one contends that the first effect or the first cause of the law of causation emanates from Iishvara, even then one pertinent question remains – how did this concept of Iishvara arise in philosophical analysis? And is this Iishvara a witnessing entity or a philosophical entity? Is it a causal entity or an instrumental entity? The Vaesheśika school of philosophy is not at all explicit on these points.

Moreover, some other points should also be clarified, such as: what is the relation between Iishvara and the molecules, atoms, neutrons and protons of the universe, and by what authority does Iishvara exercise His supervisory control over them? If this is not clearly explained, then the Vaesheśika school of philosophy becomes dualistic,⁽¹⁾ and no longer monistic at all. If it is dualistic, then how does one entity come in contact with another? So in the Vaesheśika school of philosophy, Shiva cannot be realized. The diffused light of the Vaesheśika philosophy creates only illusions, and those illusions become a confusing labyrinth that diverts people from their goal and misleads them to a dead end where they beat their heads on granite walls and moan, "O Lord, I cannot comprehend You by this metaphysics! I know You are the life of my life – but by this philosophy I have not been able to realize it. These theories have produced only a garland of tears in my silent heart. I have been blessed with a valuable human body, but shall I forever cry – "

*Pásáña devatá pújiba baliyá
Bahudúr hate esechi caliyá
Dioná dioná carañe theliyá
Kapála amár manda.
Mánaver práñe kámaná apára
Bhaya náí Prabhu phiráo ná ár
Shudháiba shudhu kii doś ámár
Ghuce yábe dvidhádva.*

[From afar I have come to worship a stone god;
Do not turn me away from Your feet –
How wretched is my fate!
Endless are the desires of the human heart;
I am not afraid, but Lord, do not disappoint me –
Tell me only, what is my fault?
How can I remove this confusion?]

A defective philosophy leads people along a defective path. I have already said this and, in connection with the Vaesheśika philosophy, I say it again.

4

Around the middle of this period of philosophy, the Miimámsá school arose. The propounders of this Miimámsá school took upon themselves the responsibility to detect and remove the defects and inconsistencies that had developed, due to the unevolved state of human intellect, in the explanation of the responsibility between the Creator and His creation. As there is no cessation in the flow of creation, similarly the Creator is without pause. Some philosophers fully accepted this truth, some partially accepted it, while others did not admit it at all. According to their respective intellects, they imposed various restrictions and limitations – some with cause and some without – on the limitlessness of the Creator.

Some philosophers propounded their doctrines merely for the satisfaction of their readers, while others painted their theories in glowing colours like a rainbow whose colourful rays appear suddenly in the firmament of logic to dazzle the eyes of the onlookers – and the next moment disappear behind the silver clouds.

But in one respect all the propounders of the Miimámsá school are the same – that is, in their verbosity and their skill in debate.

Of those philosophers of the Miimámsá school who attained special prominence as propounders of the Uttar Miimámsá philosophy, Ácárya Bádaráyaṇ Vyása, Ácárya Gaopáda, Ácárya Govindapáda and Shriimat Shankaracharya are the pioneers. Ácárya Jaemini became famous as the propounder of the Púrva Miimámsá philosophy.

The interpreters, commentators and annotators of the Uttar Miimámsá school held widely different views on most matters, but all of them accepted Brahma as the ultimate reality. Regarding the created world, some fully admitted it, some vaguely accepted it, some admitted it only reluctantly, while others did not accept it at all. According to them this creation is simply a procession of illusions. That the world appears to exist is in itself an illusion; the mind which considers the world as real is an illusion; and the person who possesses this illusory mind is also an illusion. Only Brahma exists, nothing else. The illusory entity called Máya is creating all these illusory ideas. Máya is false; She does not do anything in reality, only in appearance. Since Máya is unreal, Her existence also is false. She is Aghātana ghaṭana patīyasii – She is capable of making unreal things appear to be real. But she does not exist either. There exists only one entity, Brahma and nothing else.

*Aśtakulácalasaptasamudráh
Brahmapurandaradinakararudráh;
Na tvam náham náyam lokah
Vyartham kimapi kriyate shokah.*

“The eight great continents, the seven vast oceans, Brahmá [the Creator of this universe], Indra [the lord of energy], Súra [the sun-god] and Rudra [the god of death] – all these are unreal. Nothing exists, neither you nor I. So why do you vainly consider anything to be your own and increase the bondage of your attachment?”

The irony of this is that the propounders of these theories built impressive temples and monasteries in the false, illusory world; they extracted large fortunes from the false, illusory world; they wrote numerous books on false, illusory palm or birch leaves – and they devoted all their time and energy to the propagation of their false doctrines of Máya in this false, illusory world.

If the entire world is false, then it has no value, and the Creator Himself loses His importance. In the absence of the creation, the existence of the Creator is also jeopardized. Shiva loved this created world with all His heart. Education, medicine, social code, music, dance, rhythm, percussion, intuitional science – Shiva taught all these to His loving children. He took them on His lap – caressed them and pinched their cheeks – and with His own hands He showed them everything. Had He considered this world to be

false, He would have certainly turned His face away and neglected it – but then Shiva would not have been Shiva as we know Him. He would have been in fact shava [a corpse]. Máyáváda [the Doctrine of Illusion], one of the interpretations of the Uttar Miimámsá philosophy, completely forgot the very existence of Shiva: it made a vain attempt to establish itself by undermining the foundation of Shiva's ideology. And the strangest thing is that the pioneer of the Doctrine of Illusion himself was declared to be the avatára of Shiva! Ultimately the Uttar Miimámsá Doctrine of Illusion had to admit defeat before the vastness and universality of Shiva's personality. Thus in spite of all its verbosity and eloquence, it could not provide any philosophical base for the development of an extraordinary leader. The later scriptures written on the basis of this Doctrine of Illusion instilled in people's minds apathy and indifference to the world, which was completely opposed to the essence of Shaivism. The Uttar Miimámsá philosophy, the Doctrine of Illusion, though it may pound its head against its own unyielding walls, will never be able to catch even a glimpse of the glory of Shiva.

5

About 2500 years ago, when the sun of Árśa Dharma was about to set, when it was limited to a series of cruel sacrifices and ritualistic ostentations, without any devotion or idealism, a simmering discontent brewed in the hearts of honest, intelligent and rational people. They could not express their suppressed agony – that this lifeless, substanceless dharma was like a fruit without any pulp, unable to satisfy the deep hunger of the human heart. In fact, in most cases it was only a handful of people, motivated by the instinct of greed, who were beating the drums of dogma and ruthlessly exploiting innocent people.

Many tried to infuse fresh vitality into this stagnant and turbid pool of social life. Those who deserve special mention are Maharśi Brhaspati (popularly known as Charvaka), Vardhaman Mahavir and Gautama Buddha.

Buddha opposed those ritualistic religions in clear language and advised people to follow the path of morality. He said, "Prepare yourself and truth will spontaneously manifest itself before you." Buddha did not say anything specifically about Ishvara, his views about átman were vague, and he clearly rejected the Vedas; for these reasons the doctrine of Buddha was branded as atheism.

It is true that Buddha did not explicitly mention Ishvara, but it is also true that he never denied Ishvara. He was once asked, Kim Bhagavata atthi ["Does God exist"]? Buddha did not answer. He was again asked, Kim Bhagavata natthi ["Then does God not exist"]? Again Buddha remained silent. At this, three types of people formed three different ideas about Buddha. One group thought that since Buddha did not answer the question about the existence of God, he must be an atheist. Another group thought, since Buddha did not answer the question, "Does God then not exist?" then he must be a theist, a believer in God. And yet another group, the third group, thought, "God's existence is beyond the sańkalpa and vikalpa of the human mind, and so beyond the scope of atthi and natthi [existence and non-existence], and for that reason Buddha preferred to remain silent."

*Já teṇi boli te tabi táł
Guru bob se shiisá kál
Bhańai Káhrú jina raan bi kaesá
Káleṇ bob samvohia jaesá.*

Regarding jivátmá [unit consciousness], Buddha did not use the term jivátmá or any such word, but he uttered one sentence, Attáhi attánań natha. This sentence may have two meanings. One meaning is, "One is the lord of one's own self," and the other is, "Átman is the lord of átman." The second meaning perhaps is more acceptable because in the Prákṛta language the word appan is generally used to indicate one's own self, while the word attá is mainly used in the sense of átman, or soul. Thus one cannot conclusively prove that Buddha did not accept the existence of átman; there is sufficient scope for controversy on this point.

It is true that Buddha did not support the Vedas. But while preaching his philosophy he remarked, Eśa dhamma sanantana – "This is the eternal dharma."

Buddha clearly and firmly supported the doctrine of rebirth. In fact, no doctrine before him had placed as much stress on the theory of rebirth as his did. One who accepts the theory of rebirth is bound to accept the existence of átman also. If the átman is non-existent, then who will take rebirth?

The theory of nirváńa or mahánirváńa⁽²⁾ I prefer not to discuss here because this does not come within the scope of our discussion. Here I have merely addressed myself to the doubt one may have

about Buddha's atheistic beliefs. Now let us discuss the relation between the ideals of Shiva and the doctrine of Buddhism.

Although there is a controversy about Buddha's theistic or atheistic beliefs, there is no doubt about his concept of morality. In fact, in every sentence of Buddha's teachings, in every rhythm of his vibrations, his moralism radiates unblemished light, pure effulgence. Before him, no one had tried to illumine the minds of people with the brilliant rays of this kind of moralism. He advocated the Eight-Fold Path [Aśīa Shiila] as a path of human progress, to lead people from animality to humanity. This Eight-Fold Path consists of (1) Proper Philosophy, (2) Proper Determination, (3) Proper Speech, (4) Proper Occupation, (5) Proper Exercise, (6) Proper Work, (7) Proper Memory [i.e., meditation] and (8) Proper Attainment of Samádhi. He exhorted people to follow these progressive steps, and his teachings without doubt laid a solid base for human morality.

But it should also be remembered that although morality is the base of sádhaná, it alone cannot provide the necessary means for onward movement on the spiritual path. Morality is neither the goal nor the predominant impetus of human life. Without discussing the theistic or atheistic character of Buddhism, it can be said that it is a way of life based on morality.

Human beings are always moving. They moved in the past, they are moving now, and they will also move in the future. Their movement will never cease; it is pauseless motion. Now, those who are on the move must have a goal before them, and they should also establish some kind of relationship with the environment around them. A goal is necessary because it is the goal which attracts people towards itself. And there should be a proper environment to provide the necessary inspiration on the path of their movement. In Buddhist philosophy this is conspicuously absent. Instead, people become rather indifferent to the world. This sort of negative attitude towards everything breeds cynicism. If we accept the Shúnya of Shúnyaváda as the ultimate reality or Naerátma Shakti as the ultimate reality, in that case it becomes difficult to establish a rhythmic harmony between this Shúnya and a vibrant ideology. Yathá Shúnyavádinám Shúnyam Brahma Brahmadádmstathá – "As Shúnya is to the Shúnyavádin Buddhist, so Brahma is to the Brahmadádmstathá [the followers of Brahma]". With these words the supporters of Máyaváda interpreted Buddhism in their own way and denied the very essence of human life by comparing Brahma to a valueless zero.

The four principles that were extolled as the Four Noble Truths in Buddhist doctrine are: (1) There is suffering, (2) There is a cause of suffering, (3) There is cessation of suffering, (4) There is a way to the cessation of suffering. Now, if suffering is accepted as the fundamental truth, and avidyá is accepted as the cause of all miseries, then who is their creator? This basic question remains unanswered. According to psychology, happiness and suffering are two particular states of mind. Just as there cannot be happiness or suffering in the absence of the mind which experiences them, how can we accept suffering as a Noble Truth without accepting happiness and without accepting the mind? In truth, is this not a negative attitude towards life? But Shiva was positive in all respects – from His toes to His matted locks. Every aspect of His existence glittered with the glow of positivity. The sweet touch of His firm and tender personality made life overflowing with delight. In the mirror of pessimism, His effulgence, His radiant splendour, can never be reflected. In the aura surrounding Shiva's personality, the darkness of pessimism is bound to lose its existence. Thus the glory of Shiva's personality can never be realized within the framework of pessimism.

6

Just as the popular discontent with the ritualistic ostentations of the so-called dharma found expression in Buddhism, so emerged the philosophy of Jainism. Both these religions were in open revolt against the karmakánda [ritualistic portions of the Vedas], but they were not so opposed to the jñánakánda [philosophical portions], because these were quite popular with spiritual aspirants. Sádhaná or intuitional practice was almost unknown to the common masses; they were content with the Vedic rituals and with the guidance of a particular class of people, and mistakenly accepted this as the path of dharma. Both Buddha and Vardhaman Mahavir [the founder of Jainism] vehemently opposed the ritualistic sacrifices, especially of animals, and both of them protested against the hostile attitude of the so-called dharma towards morality. Although Buddha declared ahimsá [the doctrine of non-violence] to be the height of dharma, he also greatly emphasized morality; whereas Vardhaman Mahavir gave importance to ahimsá but was not emphatic about morality.

Philosophically both of them espoused the theory of nirvána, although with some distinction. Buddha's concept of nirvána was jñána nirvána,⁽³⁾ whereas Mahavir's concept of nirvána was karma nirvána.⁽⁴⁾ Both sought to lead people along their paths, but Mahavir could not evoke as great a response

from the people as Buddha, with his stirring call of compassion. Although Vardhamán did not altogether deny the existence of the world, he was somewhat detached from practical life.

The Jain religion, based on rigorous austerity and renunciation, tended to ignore, to some extent, human life and its pains and pleasures in the practical world. But Shiva was just the opposite. He inspired and motivated people to move forward in all spheres of life, and He also came forward personally to lead them.

7

Whether Buddhism or Jainism is atheistic or theistic, good or bad, is not at all the topic of discussion here. Although they opposed the ritualistic religions of their day, they never transgressed morality; they always adhered to a moral code. The materialistic philosophy of Charvaka, however, in opposing the ostentatious religious practices, denied moral principles and human values.

*Yávajiivet sukham jīvet,
Rīam krtvá ghrtam pivet.*

[As long as you live, you should live happily –
Even if you have to go into debt, you should eat butter!]

What type of statement is this? This kind of remark will propel people to the depths of animality, where each person will mistrust others, and exploitation will roll the wheels of its chariot over the ribs of human beings. This kind of materialism is simply exploitation in the physical and mental spheres. Not only that, it transforms people into pleasure-seekers and finally destroys all their inner treasures. The very foundation of human life will be demolished.

*Yávajjivam sukham jīvam nāsti mrtyoragocarah;
Bhasmiibhūtasya dehasya punarāgamanam kutah.*

[As long as you are on this earth, live in happiness – there is
nothing after death.
How can a body which has already been burnt, return?]

In the Vedas there is a ritual portion (karmakāṇḍa, composed of mantra and Bráhmaṇ [regulations for yajñas]) and a philosophical portion (jñānakāṇḍa, composed of Áraṇyaka and Upaniśada). Although the ritual portion may be used to increase ignorance or exploitation, the knowledge portion cannot be so easily utilized for that purpose, and should not be rejected outright. Many profound human values are embedded in these scriptures. Moreover, even if there is any philosophical controversy, one will have to establish one's position through logic and rational argument, through vāda, jalpa and vitaṇḍā. Rude and indecorous language is not at all tolerable.

*Trayavedasya karttārah
Bhāṇḍa dhūrtta nishācarāh*

[The authors of the three Vedas
Are hypocritical, cunning and ghoulish.]

What an indecent remark! In condemning the showy rituals, the author has degraded himself.

It is easily proved that this material world is composed of five fundamental factors. If anyone denies the existence of the ethereal factor, then present-day science and technology becomes ineffective.

*Caturbhyah khalu bhūtebhyah caetanyamupajāyate;
Kinvādibhyah samatebhyah dravyebhyah madashaktivat.*

According to Charvaka's philosophy, the human mind or human consciousness is a fifth factor born out of a mixture of four factors – solid, liquid, fire and air. It was compared to certain substances which start to ferment with the addition of another substance, and thus cause intoxication. This quality of intoxication was then considered to be an additional factor. Or it was compared to people chewing catechu – they mix lime with the catechu to produce a red colour which stains their lips, but this red colour is not something new. The Charvaka philosophers forgot that if the collection of the four fundamental material factors produced consciousness, then the potentiality of consciousness was certainly already inherent in those four factors, and upon their combination that potentiality becomes an actuality – just as the red colour born of the mixture of catechu and lime, was already in potential form in

that catechu and lime and was manifested when those two substances were mixed in proper proportion. Out of nothing something did not emerge.

Thus Charvaka's philosophy, instead of challenging the ostentatious religions with clear logic, vainly attempted to triumph with irrational jugglery of words. Any rational person knows that there are three kinds of proof of knowledge – direct perception, inference, and authority. Through these logical proofs the various branches of knowledge such as the humanities and sciences have advanced, are advancing, and will continue to advance in future. But the Charvaka philosophy did not accept any proof other than direct perception:

*Pratyakśyaeva pramāṇavāditayā
Anumānāde anamāṅgikāreṇa pramāṇyābhāvāt.*

That is, such a philosopher "will not accept the existence of his grandfather because he did not see him" – he saw his father, but not his grandfather. One who has never travelled outside India cannot accept the existence of the city of London. One who has not seen the Vedic scriptures will not acknowledge their existence. What sort of philosophy is this? Hearing such a theory, even the roadside bulls will roar with laughter!

Even though from such a materialistic philosophy people do not expect anything leading to their mental and spiritual development, at least in the physical sphere, they may expect something beneficial – the fulfilment of their mundane needs such as clothes, medicine, shelter, education, etc. But they will not even attain these, because when the people who are responsible for the fulfilment of these mundane needs are not moralists, when they do not stand on the firm foundation of morality, how will they provide for people's worldly necessities? While trying to serve people, selfish thoughts will certainly hover in their minds, and they will live in constant fear that others might snatch power from their hands or take revenge for their deliberate misdeeds. Thus the materialists will not even be able to fulfil the physical necessities of the people; rather by sowing the seeds of doubt, distrust and violence in people's minds, they will pollute the earth's atmosphere and people will suffocate in this poisonous smoke.

To do something good, one must have an idealistic mind. How can materialists accept this essential rule of the mind if they do not accept the superiority of mind over matter? Thus neither in theory nor in practice can materialism promote the least welfare of the human race.

If materialism ever comes to power, its macabre dance will perpetuate its temporary reign of terror by creating a fear complex in the peoples' minds. Crushing the finer sensibilities of the human mind, it will convert people into living dead. At best, human beings will become like domesticated animals in the zoo, where they get full meals and move about within the boundaries of the park, listening to monotonous music as entertainment. But they will never have the opportunity to sing freely themselves, with full-throated voices; or to cross the boundary fence, and, walking on the soft carpet of green grass, enjoy the sweet fragrance of the vast world outside. Who wants to become an animal in a zoo like this?

Young animals will never be content to remain inside such a zoo, even though the best food and a rather secure life are guaranteed to them; whenever they find any opportunity, they will cross the boundary and escape. They will have to be forced inside the fence with bayonets. Otherwise, they will never remain inside.

But materialism is most dangerous when it tries to suppress mental expansion, when it creates obstacles in the transformation of mind from crude to subtle – when it blocks the passageway of human development from the graceful beauty of the mind to the spiritual sweetness of the soul. Materialism tends to forget that the crude physical body and its vital energy are not the whole of human existence – that the most priceless assets of human beings are their psychic wealth, their spiritual treasures, and their most beloved entity, Parama Puruṣa, the Lord of their life.

*Mor nay shudhumātra prāṇ
Sarvavitta rikta kari yār hay yātrā abasān;
Yāhā phurāile din shūnya asthi diye shodhe āhār nidrā
sheś rī;
Bhebechi jenechi yāhā balechi shunechi yāhā kāne
Sahasā geyechi yāhā gāne
Dhareni tā maraṇer berāgherā prāṇe;
Yā peyechi yā karechi dān
Marttye tār kothā parimāṇ;
Āmār maner nrtya katabār jīvan mrtyure*

*Launghiyá caliyá geche cirasundarer surapure
Círakál tare se ki theme yábe sheśe kauṅkáler siimánáy ese!
Ye ámar satya paricay
Mámse tár parimáp nay;
Padágháte jiirná táhá náhi kare dańdapalguli
Sarvasvánta náhi kare pathapránte dhúli
Ámi ye rúper padme karechi arúp madhupán
Duhkher bakśer májhe ánander peyechi sandhán
Ananta maoner bańii sunechi antare
Dekhechi jyotir path shunyamay ándhár prántare;
Nahi ámi vidhátár brhat parihás
Asiim aeshvarya diye racita mahat sarvanásha.*

[The entire wealth of my life will not be exhausted when my
journey ends;
At the end of my days my bare bones will repay my life's debt of
food and sleep.
What I have thought, what I have known,
What I have said, what I have heard,
What songs my lips have sung –
This life of mine cannot be contained within the bounds of death,
And all I have received, all I have given in this world –
How can it be measured?
How many times has the dance of my mind
Crossed the boundaries of life and death
Into the divine realm of beauty eternal?
Will this all end forever in a skeleton?
My true identity cannot be measured in terms of flesh.
Will everything be exhausted in the passage of time and of
footsteps,
And at the end of the road – only dust?
In the lotus of forms I have tasted the sweetness of the Formless
One,
In the bosom of sorrow I have found bliss,
Inside my heart I have heard the voice of infinite silence,
In the blinding darkness of the void I have seen the path of
light.
I am not simply a great joke of fate
Was I created from boundless wealth, merely for annihilation?]

Materialism is the most dangerous – indeed, suicidal – philosophy. The other defective philosophies, which are not devoid of morality, view Shiva from afar as a mysterious personality, but materialism is both defective and devoid of morality. That is why materialists do not recognize Shiva, did not recognize Him, and will not recognize Him. Even seeing Him before their very eyes, they will never understand who Shiva is.

6 August 1982, Patna

Footnotes

- (1) Dualistic because there is a duality between the controller and the controlled. –Trans.
- (2) The Buddhist concept of liberation. –Eds.
- (3) That is, that one could attain nirváṇa by adopting the path of knowledge. –Trans.
- (4) That is, that one could attain nirváṇa by detaching oneself from all mundane activities. –Trans.

Shiva in the Song of Shiva (Discourse 19)

*Jaya shubhavajradhara shubhra kalevara
Vyághrámbara Hara dehi padam;
Jaya Viśáńaninádaka kleshavidúra
Sarvadhíidháraka dehi padam;*

*Jaya Ádipitá Ádideva mantresha Mahádeva
Bhávátiita abhinava dehi padam;
Rajataagirinibha madhumaya durlabha
Ánanda amitábha dehi padam;
Jaya satya sanátana paramapadam.*

[Victory to the benevolent wielder of the thunderbolt, the one with white-complexioned body Clad in tiger-skin – give me shelter at Your feet; Victory to the blower of the long horn, the remover of all afflictions, The Supreme entity in whom all intellect is sheltered – give me shelter at Your feet; Victory to the First Father, the First Lord, the lord of mantra, the God of Gods, Beyond thought, ever-new – give me shelter at Your feet; One who looks like a silver mountain, full of sweetness, difficult to attain, Blissful, infinitely radiant – give me shelter at Your feet; Victory to the supreme, eternal truth.]

1. Vajra: A kind of powerful weapon invented and used by Shiva. He used this weapon to protect the honest and virtuous people as well as innocent birds and animals, and to strike at the sinful, violent and arrogant antisocial elements. Shiva was very restrained and self-possessed in all spheres of life; He would use His weapon only on rare occasions. From a perusal of history we learn that He never used this weapon against any virtuous person. Human beings as well as animals in trouble used to approach Shiva for security; Shiva would protect them and admonish their enemies to move along the path of righteousness. By repeated persuasion He tried to rectify their defects. Only against those who refused to correct their ways and, on the contrary, tried to further their own self-interest by opposing Shiva, did He use this weapon. Since it was used to promote the welfare of all living beings, it was rightly called shubhavajra [“the thunderbolt of welfare”].

Shiva had unbounded love not only for human beings but for animals as well, and so He was respected as Pashupati [the Lord of Animals]. His vajra was also called Páshupata Astra [the Weapon of Pashupati]. By Shiva’s grace, some honest and virtuous people also acquired this weapon and had the opportunity to learn how to use it. One whose vajra was always used with benevolent intent was rightly called shubhavajradhara.

2. In those days the Aryans were fair-complexioned, the non-Aryans dark-complexioned, and the Mongolians yellow-complexioned. But Shiva was white-complexioned. His immense purity of mind was in perfect harmony with His white complexion. Regarding His complexion it has been stated kundendu-hima-shaunkha shubhra – that is, Shiva is as white as a kunda flower... as the lovely moon... as the glittering snow... as a conch shell. Hence the epithet shubhra kalevara [“one with a white-complexioned body”].

3. Since the beginning of yoga practice, yogis have sat on various kinds of materials which are by nature non-conductors of heat and electricity. The yogis of olden times mostly sat on animal skins, and in many cases they also used animal skins as their outer garments. Later, for lack of animal skins, people started using blankets as ásanas [meditation seats]. Shiva was fond of using tiger skins both as His seat during meditation and as His outer garments. About 4500 years after Shiva, due to the influence of the Digambara Jain cult, He was depicted as digambara [without clothes] – which was not at all true. Actually Shiva was never digambara. He was indifferent to His dress, but He never did anything indecent. In the dhyána mantra of Shiva, there is no reference to Shiva as digambara, as one whose body is smeared with ashes, as one who is addicted to opium or hashish. These were the latter-day fantasies of some irresponsible people. Thus in the “Shivagiiti” [“Song of Shiva”], Shiva has been described as vyághrámbara Hara.⁽¹⁾

4. Harati pápán ityarthe Hari [“One who steals other’s sins is called Hari”], and Harati bandanam ityarthe Hara [“One who cuts asunder the knots of bondages is called Hara”]. That great personality who lays out the spiritual path which leads to liberation from all kinds of bondages is called Hara. If He is not Hara, then who deserves such a glorious epithet?

5. One should proceed toward Parama Puruśa without the least thought of selfishness, and should not ask Him for anything. In fact, Parama Puruśa knows the real needs of human beings better than they themselves – the parents of a child know the child’s need better than the child itself. So an ideal sádha is one who never asks Parama Puruśa for anything – who asks only for Parama Puruśa Himself. Thus here Parama Puruśa is beseeched, dehi padam – “give me shelter at Your feet”.

6. In olden days neglected and exploited people, who had fallen prostrate under extreme oppression, used to look upon Shiva as their supreme shelter. Shiva would crush this exploitation with His thunderbolt – He would strike the arrogance of vain and egotistic people with His trident, and reduce to

ashes the mountains of injustice and tyranny. He felt great compassion for those afflicted people and, making them sit beside Him, advised them how to solve their physical, psychic and spiritual problems. Shiva used to live on a hill, and all kinds of people from far and near would flock to Him. He would call them with the call of His *viśāṇa*, His long horn, and that is why the people of those days could not think of Him without His *viśāṇa* – so they lovingly nicknamed Him “*Viśāṇaninādaka*” [“One who Blows the *Viśāṇa*”]. Perhaps those persecuted people, whose lustreless faces showed no glow of well-being, who had been reduced to skeletons by their back-breaking labour, who had no soft bed of flowers on which to rest – those persecuted people, buffeted by hunger and exhausted by injustice – were not at all beautiful. That is why the arrogant tyrants of those days contemptuously called them “ghouls” and “ghosts”. But those so-called ghouls and ghosts were in fact the companions of Shiva. These unbeautiful representatives of the hungry masses of the world of that time were actually the simple and devoted followers of Shiva, His *gaṇas* who spoiled the *yajña* of King Daksha.

7. *Kleshakarmavipākāśhayaeraparāmrśāḥ Puruśavisheṣa Iishavarah* – “That *Puruśa* who remains unassailed by *klesha* [afflictions], by the bondages of *karma*, by *vipāka* [reactions] and *āshaya* [*saṁskāras*] is called *Iishvara*.”

Shiva wanted His beloved devotees, His *gaṇas* who took shelter under Him, to attain the highest spiritual realization, and so He Himself used to teach them the different processes of spiritual practice to remove all spiritual and psychic afflictions; and moreover He spared no effort to help His devotees to overcome all mundane and social difficulties.

Whenever Shiva noticed tears in the eyes of His devotees He felt restless. In fact, everyone was aware of the tenderness and flower-like softness of His large heart. Even wicked people used to take full advantage of His large-heartedness. Even though Shiva realized this, He would not change His ways. He never said, “I have made a mistake by forgiving those people, by granting them boons.” Thus this noble personality, the remover of all the afflictions of the universe, was lovingly called *Ashutoṣa*, One Who Is Easily Pleased.

8. Just as a unit entity is quite insignificant next to the vast Cosmic Entity, similarly the intellect of a unit entity is completely insignificant next to the vast intellectual power of the Cosmic Entity. In the brilliant light of the sun, the feeble glow of a firefly is invisible. What to speak of a firefly – even the moon and stars fade in the presence of the sun! Only in the blinding darkness of night are the moon, the stars and the fireflies important – only then do they dare to strut and prance. Similarly, as long as living beings remain forgetful of *Parama Puruśa*, they pompously display their little intellect. Some people do not realize, others do realize, and still others pretend not to realize, that the Cosmic Mind is the only shelter of all unit minds. Thus all their intellectual abilities, all their swaggering and boasting, are all contained within the vast bosom of the Cosmic Mind. Thus it has been rightly said that Shiva is *sarvadhīdhāraka* [“the Supreme Entity in whom all intellect is sheltered”].

9. Shiva was the first person in the universe to marry; before Him no one was married in the true sense of the term. No male would take any kind of household responsibility, only perhaps a nominal responsibility such as animals do. But when Shiva is addressed here as “*Ādipitā*” [“First Father”], it does not mean that He was the first married person. It means that He was such a great personality that out of His deep paternal love and compassion He provided a safe shelter not only to human beings but also to animals. He gave them food to eat, the touch of warmth in cold, consolation in sorrow, and made them realize the warm feeling of existence. Before Him people were half animal, half human. These people, who had been devoid of any social consciousness and mutual love for each other, built a sweet and loving environment revolving around Shiva; they created a social atmosphere of peace and happiness, a cool and shady bower of peace. For the first time in history, people began to realize that they were human beings.

The loving inspiration of Shiva made those mute people eloquent, and they proclaimed with a sweet smile on their faces, *Harame pitā Gaorii mātā svadeshah bhuvanatrāyam* [“Shiva is my father, *Pārvatī* is my mother, and the three worlds of earth, heaven and hell are my native land”]. They further declared, *Ātma gotraṁ parityajya Shivagotraṁ pravishatu* [“Leave your own gotra and enter Shivagotra”]. “From now on there will be no discrimination among us, no conflict among the clans. Regardless of our colour – black, white, yellow – we are all the sons and daughters of Shiva. We all belong to one gotra – Shivagotra.” Thus the prehistoric humans, united by the common bond of the fatherhood of Shiva, strengthened the foundation of their mutual relationships. They realized that because Shiva was their father, their lives were in harmony and rhythm. Thus Shiva was the first father of the human race.

10. The word *deva* is derived from the Sanskrit root verb *div*. The word *deva* means an entity which is shining in its own spiritual effulgence. In this universe, a benevolent entity which is an embodiment of

serenity and beauty is called deva. After feeling the tender touch of Shiva's large-heartedness, people understood the concept of deva, and they declared Shiva to be ádideva ["the first deva"].

11. Long ago people learned to perform sacrifices, they realized in theory that God exists, but they did not know how to attain Him – how to develop God-consciousness, how to make themselves fit instruments for the attainment of the Supreme. Shiva prepared the path of sáadhaná for them and taught them how to evolve their minds with the help of mantra. Mananát tárayet yastu sah mantrah parikiirtitah ["A mantra is that collection of sounds which, when meditated upon, leads to liberation"].

Shiva also taught the people how to develop themselves spiritually with the help of mantra yoga, rája yoga and other branches of rájádhiráj yoga.⁽²⁾ Then people accepted unanimously that Shiva was mantrádhpati, or mantresha – "the lord of mantra". Shiva equally loved animals and human beings. As He protected the animals, He was addressed as Pashupati. In the spiritual world, He gave shelter to the sádhakas of viirabháva [a kind of Tantric ideation]. So, He was respectfully addressed as "Vireshvara". And as He was the guardian of those sádhakas of noble character and developed intellect, He was addressed as "Mahádeva" [the "Lord of Lords"]. Devánám devah ityartho Mahádeva ["The Lord of lords is Mahádeva"].

For ages those exalted entities considered as devas have said,

*Tava tattvaṁ na jánámi kiidrsho'si Maheshvara;
Yádrsho'si Mahádeva tadrsháya namo namah.*

"O Maheshvara, it is not possible for the unit mind to understand You. Whenever I have tried to fathom You in any way, I did not succeed, so I do not know what You really are. But whatever You are, I pay my deepest salutation to You."

12. That mental state which is created in the subtlest, most solitary recesses of the mind, which inspires the practical side of thought, which develops human personality, is called bháva:

*Shuddhasattvavishesádvá premasúryámshusámyabhák,
Rucibhishcittamásríya krdasao bháva ucyate.*

[That which makes one extremely pure and sentient, which causes the sun of love to shine, Which makes the mind clean-surfaced and soft owing to the spiritual effulgence, is called bháva.]

Parama Purúsa, the Supreme Reality, is beyond all speech and thought: He is beyond the reach of the vocal cord. So He is bhávátiita ["beyond bháva"]. Shiva was also beyond the reach of ordinary intelligence. Although His body was composed of the five fundamental factors, He was beyond them. The more one thinks of His infinite qualities, the more one becomes speechless, the more deeply one becomes absorbed in Him. However He is viewed, He is seen to be the newest of the new – constantly new. That is why He has been described as bhávátiita abhinava ["beyond bháva, ever-new"].

13. In the "Shivagiiti" as well as the dhyána mantra of Shiva, Shiva is described as rajatagirinibha. That is, the physical appearance of Shiva was like a great silver mountain. Not only the external complexion of Shiva was silvery, His mind also was stainless and sparkling white. There was no difference between the inside and outside of the white-complexioned Shiva, the embodiment of náda.⁽³⁾

Shiva the great intellectual, great yogi, great tapasvii [one who performs penance], the most glorious one, whose inside and outside were in perfect balance, was the shelter and the vehicle for the development of others.

14. There are endless varieties of humans in the world. Each of them according to his or her inherent saṁskáras is moving forward from the distant past to the more distant future. But how many of them are really human beings? How few people can we fully trust – to whom we can tell all our pains and pleasures, to whom we can divulge all the thoughts of our minds and hearts and feel completely relieved, to whom we can say, "O Lord, You know everything. I have nothing to hide from You." No, we do not ordinarily find such people. They are not only rare, they are also as sweet as honey. After coming into contact with such a person even once, one feels forever drawn to Him, one's heart yearns for Him, one cannot help but be pulled by His irresistible attraction. He is at the same time "filled with sweetness and difficult to attain".⁽⁴⁾

One cannot get Him easily like puffed rice in the market place. We cannot build a temple and permanently confine Him inside.

Even if one runs about the external world like a mad dog one will not find Him. One will have to seek Him, the most beloved, with the highest love in the innermost recesses of the heart, in the most solitary jewel-case of the mind.

15. The universe has emerged as a blissful vibration from the Supreme Entity – *Ānandāddhyeva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyante. Ānandena jātāni jīvanti. Ānandam prayantyaabhi samvishanti.* ["Out of bliss all beings were born, in bliss they are living, and into bliss they will ultimately dissolve."]

This bliss, these blissful entities and the blissful Parama Puruṣa: all three are one; they are one in three. And all manifest and unmanifest entities are glittering with the effulgence of this blissful Parama Puruṣa. He is vibrating all entities, substantiating their existence. So He is *ānanda* ["bliss"] and *amītābha* ["infinitely radiant"].

16. That entity which existed in the past, which exists at present, and which will ever exist in the future is called *sanātana*. This entity is not only *rta* [existing in fact] but also *satya* [existing for the sake of welfare]. That is, His existence is *kalyāṇamukha* [supreme benevolence], as well as *kalyāṇamadhura* [benevolent sweetness]. Because of this sweet, benevolent touch, Parama Puruṣa, the eternal reality, is eternal sweetness, eternal beauty:

*Yadi cirasundara nāhi habe go
Kena candra sūrya graha tāra sab
Caraṇe lutāye rabe go.
Kusuma bitare taba madhurimā
Samiiran bahe tomāri susamā
Nad-nadii-giri ban-upavan
Mahimā tomāri pracāre go.
Mahān haite tumi sumahān
Anāther nāth jagater prān
Parashe tomār dūre yāy jvālā
Shānti parāṇe pāi go.
Tāi aharaha gāhiyā biraha
Tomārei sabe cāhe go.*

[If You are not the ever-beautiful One,
Then why should the sun, moon, planets and stars
All cling to Your feet?
The flowers diffuse Your sweetness,
The wind carries Your exquisite grace.
Rivers, mountains, forests and glades
All proclaim Your glory.
From the great to the greater,
You are the greatest;
You are the Lord of the helpless,
The life of the universe.
Your touch removes all agony,
And bestows peace in the heart;
So those who suffer the constant pain of separation
All yearn for You.]

That is why He is *satya sanātana* ["eternal truth"], why He alone is *satya sanātana*.

The Supreme Reality is vibrant with blissful vibrations; He is the greatest of all entities, the highest, above all, beyond all comparison. *Tulā vā upamā Shivasya nāsti* ["Shiva has no comparison"]. His existence, His stance, His ever-blissful state, is the highest stage of attainment. From Him one should not ask for anything. One should only ask to attain the supreme stance – nothing more than that, nothing less than that.

8 August 1982, Patna

Footnotes

(1) "Hara" means "Shiva"; *vyāghra* means "tiger", and *ambara* means "clothes". So *vyāghrāmbara Hara* means "Shiva clad in a tiger-skin". –Trans.

(2) Different systems of *yoga sādhanā*. –Trans.

(3) The divine sound that arises from the heart in an exalted state of consciousness. –Trans.

(4) That is, madhumaya durlabha. –Trans.

Shiva in the Dhyána Mantra (Discourse 20)

*Dhyáyennityam Mahesham rajatagirinibham carucandrá vatamsam;
Ratnákalpojjvalámgam parashu-mrga-barábhiitihastam prasannam.
Padmásiinam samantam stutamamaragaríavryághrakrtim vasanam;
Vishvadyam vishvabijam nikhilabhayaharam pañcavaktram trinetrām.*

[One should constantly meditate on Maheshvara, who is like a silver mountain, whose ornament is the lovely moon –

Whose limbs are brightened with the splendour of jewels, with axe
in hand, holding animals, bestowing boons, ever-blissful –

Seated in lotus posture, wearing a tiger-skin, worshipped by all the gods –

The seed, the cause of this vast world, who removes the boundless fears of the entire universe –
the One with five faces and three eyes.]

A controller is called iishvara in Sanskrit. In all large and small matters of this world, there are controllers on all levels and holding different positions. One who is endowed with an extremely powerful mind with enlightened vision, whose heart is saturated with compassionate love – only such a person can be the Supreme Controller of all the small, medium and great controllers.

*Tamiishvaránám paramam Maheshvaram tam devatánám paramam ca daevatam;
Patin pati nam paramam parastad vidama devam bhuvaneshamiidyam.*

“You are Maheshvara, the Controller of the controllers; You are Mahádeva, the Lord of the lords. You are the King of the kings, the greatest of the great, you are worshipped by the entire universe. So, Shiva, whether I know You or not, You are the Controller of all, You are the Supreme Controller, Maheshvara.”

The white-complexioned Shiva is as resplendent as the snow-white Raevataka Mountain glittering with light.

Did Shiva really have a crescent moon on His head? On this matter I must say a few words. In the different subtle-energy centres, or plexi (cakras, or padmas), of the human body, there are various types of glands and sub-glands. From these glands and sub-glands different hormones are secreted, and they control the body, mind and vrttis in various ways. Now, the controlling points of these propensities, which are fifty in number, are located in nine cakras in the human body. Each of these cakras has colours and sounds. The inseparable association of these colours and sounds produces fifty fundamental sounds which are also called letters (vowels and consonants). The other, compound sounds originated from these primary letters, and thus these fifty original letters are called the causal matrix. Generally speaking, the hormones secreted from the higher cakras, and their related sounds and colours, influence the lower cakras. The sahasrára cakra, the highest cakra, with one thousand propensities, controls all the lower cakras. The hormone or nectar secreted from the pineal gland, the gland which is related to this cakra, inspires an indescribable spiritual realization in the human body, mind and heart – an ecstasy which transcends thought. This divine nectar is always being secreted in the pineal glands of all human beings; but if their minds are filled with crude, material thoughts, it is immediately destroyed. But if at the time of this hormonal secretion, a person is immersed in spiritual ideation, then one experiences a blissful intoxication, and falls under the spell of divine ecstasy. From outside, such sádhakas may be misunderstood to be in a drunken state.

Shiva was often in that state of divine ecstasy, and those people addicted to drinking or smoking hashish or opium thought that perhaps Shiva was intoxicated like them:

*Surápán karine ámi, sudhá khái "Jay Kálii" bale,
Man-mátále matal kare, mad-mátále matal bale.*

[I don't drink wine, I take divine nectar, saying, "Victory to Kálii."

My mind, intoxicated with bliss-causing hormones, makes me drunk.

But those who are intoxicated with drink call me a drunkard.]

The people of those days used to think that of the sixteen digits, or portions, of the moon, we can see fourteen digits on the fourteenth day of the fortnight, and fifteen on the full-moon day. But because

of the somewhat angular position of the moon, we never see the sixteenth digit. So the people thought that the spiritual nectar was secreted from that sixteenth digit, and gave the name amákalá [dark phase] to this sixteenth digit.

Under the spell of this divine nectar, Shiva used to remain absorbed in Himself; so, many people thought that the invisible sixteenth phase of the moon was on Shiva's head. Due to the pineal secretion of this divine nectar, Shiva became oblivious to all external phenomena; thus He was called Bholanátha [the Lord of Forgetfulness]. It was said of Him, cárucandrá vatańsám ["one whose beautiful ornament is the lovely moon"].

Was Shiva only white-complexioned? No, His whole body gleamed with the effulgence of that divine nectar-like snow glistening with the reflection of the midday sun, like the attractive lustre of emeralds in this world of ignorance. The white-complexioned body of Shiva was resplendent with the brilliance which radiates from diamonds and other jewels. Thus it was said, ratnakalpojvaláńgarń ["one whose body is resplendent like jewels"]. The radiance of Shiva's sweet fragrant and tender body was enchanting –

Apúrva táńr deher subás mamatámay áńkhi dúti
Apúrva táńr madhur váníi
Apúrva táńr ánana khání
Apúrva táńr komala tanu, manamátáno sei hásiti.

[Wondrous the fragrance of His body, His two eyes filled with love,
Wondrous His sweet voice,
Wondrous His divine face,
Wondrous His tender body, wondrous His smile that delights the mind.]

To suppress the arrogance of the tyrants, Shiva held an axe. And, as He used to take care of all humans, animals and plants as His own children and loved them with all His heart, the animals used to approach Him without any fear. It should be remembered that mrga in Sanskrit does not mean only "deer"; it means any wild animal. Shákhámrga ("tree animal") is another name for monkeys, because they live in the branches of trees. Mrgacarma means the skin of any wild animal, not only deer-skin. In olden days, the kings used to go hunting (mrgayá); this does not mean that they were hunting only deer; they used to hunt any wild animal. Thus all wild animals used to receive safe shelter near Shiva. When any human or animal would come to Shiva, fearful and in danger, He would always reassure them and grant them boons of welfare. This Shiva, who was indifferent to His personal comforts, could not remain unmoved if He saw tears in the eyes of the wicked; He prepared the path for their rectification and also granted them boons.

Under all circumstances He maintained His mental composure. Even in the most serious danger, the smile on His face would never fade; He would never lose His composure even in the gravest crisis. Such an ever-smiling face is rare in the history of the universe.

Usually He would sit in a posture called padmášana [lotus posture]. It is called padmášana because it is just like a lotus in full bloom. Just as the roots and stems of the lotus remain under the water and only the leaves and flowers float above it – and although it is born in the mud it sustains its love for the stars – in the same way, people sitting in this lotus posture and remaining in the world, can keep their minds above their mundane environment. That is why on the path of sáđhaná this posture has tremendous importance. Even though He took upon Himself all the physical and psychic responsibilities of the entire world, Shiva, when seated in this posture, was just like a lotus in full bloom, transcending all the impurities and dirt of the mind. In Shiva was the harmonious adjustment between the physical and psychic world on the one hand and the spiritual world on the other.

It is true that whatever is created in this universe is subject to decay and change. It is equally true that all the divine vibrations, all the Cosmic thought projections (devas) emanating from the Universal Nucleus, are all rushing towards the unfathomable void, towards the distant future. So we may say that these divine rays, these devas, are immortal. They approach near, and they go far – incalculable millions of light-years away.

It is said that these devas also worship Mahádeva, the God of gods; they pay their salutations to Him. It is a general rule that whenever someone discovers qualities in a person greater than one's own, one worships that person. All the gods, all the divine rays, all the effulgent emanations, are far, far less important than Shiva, and that is why they all eulogize Him. Even if these devas are endowed with many great qualities, next to Shiva they are insignificant, because they are all under the bondages of the guńas, while Shiva is beyond all bondages. One who is in bondage always seeks the shelter of another who is liberated.

Prabhumiishamaniishamasheságuañám guñahiinamaheshagarábharañam.

"O Lord Shiva, you are Mahesha, the Lord of All – and You are also Aniisha – You have no lord. O Shiva, when we try to analyse Your qualities, we can never come to an end, because Your qualities are infinite. We call You Guñádhiisha because you are not bound by the guñas. On the ears, necks, arms and waists of the gods there are so many ornaments to increase their splendour – but You have nothing. Your favourite devotees, Your dearest followers, Your beloved children – they are Your ornaments, they are Your jewel necklaces, they are Your glory. You spend Your days in thinking only of them.

"O Shiva, it is beyond all human capacity to describe Your qualities" –

*Asitagirisamañ syát kajjalam sindhupátre surataruvarashákhá lekhanii patramurvii;
Likhati yadi grhiitvá sáradá sarvakálam tathápi tava guñánāmiisha páram na yāti.*

"O First Father, First Lord, Lord of Mantra, Great God, it is not possible to enumerate Your qualities. If we take the mighty Himalayas as a great ink tablet and place it in an ink-pot as vast as the ocean; if we use a branch of the mythological Párijáta tree as the pen, and the surface of the world as a sheet of paper; and if Sarasvatii the goddess of learning writes for eternity with this ink, ink-pot, pen and paper, still she will never finish writing of Your glory."

Here Shiva is the combination of all the guñas, in Him are gathered all the qualities – and yet He is also guñátiita [beyond the guñas] and guñahiina [without bondage of guñas]. Because He transcends the guñas, and because He is devoid of all the guñas, all the entities of the three worlds prostrate before Him in full surrender, and say in one voice, "You are our father, You are our first father, You are our Táraka Brahma, the Supreme Liberator – You are our everything. Again and again we prostrate at Your Feet."

In the Jain period, due to the influence of the Jain doctrine, some ignorant people thought that Shiva was digambara [unclothed]. In the dhyána mantra it has been clearly stated that He is seated on, and wearing, a tiger-skin. Since He used to wear a tiger-skin He had another name, "Krttívása" [krtti mean "tiger-skin"]. The deep conception of Shiva as Parama Puruśa, the embodiment of Supreme Consciousness, is one with our tangible Shiva who is so close to us. All the qualities of Parama Brahma in the role of the Supreme Entity and the First Creator – all these we find in Shiva. Thus we can say without hesitation that Shiva is indeed the maryádá [replica] of the Supreme Father: He is the replica of Puruśottama [the Macrocosmic Nucleus]. He is the First Puruśa, the Supreme Shiva, and we recognize Him as vishvādya ["the source of the universe"].

The root cause of the creation lies in Ádipuruśa [The First Puruśa] and Ádishiva. Ádishiva transforms niśkalatva [the first cause in its unmanifested state] into sakalatva [all the manifestations of creation] by His mere wish. Without the wish of Paramashiva [Ádishiva], the Primordial Prakrti is not able to assume Her manifested form. That is why the fundamental cause of the universe is not the Primordial Prakrti but Ádishiva Himself. Thus in the dhyána mantra it has been clearly stated that Shiva is vishvabija ["the seed of the universe"].

An entity which is boundless or unbarred is called nikhila or akhila. In different spheres of life, in different realms of thought, people became frightened by many things. Just as wild animals are always afraid of their various enemies, in the past, human life was also filled with fears. For the human beings of today the degree of fear in the physical sphere has much decreased; but in the psychic world of thought the degree of fear has greatly increased. Today people are not so afraid of smaller weapons: indeed, there is greater security of life now. But the fear of large weapons such as atomic bombs has increased. Shiva made earnest and constant efforts to save human beings as well as animals from all sorts of fear: He developed a science of medicine to save them from the scourge of disease; He invented various types of weapons to liberate them from the fear of their enemies; He evolved various branches of knowledge to remove their psychic fears; and He introduced Tantra Yoga to remove their spiritual fears. Moreover, He gave shelter to animals, as well; He taught the human beings to protect and nurture animals and plants. Thus about Him it has been said, nikhilabhayaharam ["the one who removes the boundless fears of the universe"].

Shiva is also called pañcavaktram, which means "one who has five faces". Now the question is, did Shiva really have five faces? No, no one having a physical body can have five faces. The idea of the five-faced Shiva is purely a symbol of the five expressions of one and the same face. The central face, the real face, of Shiva, is Kalyāñasundaram. The face on the extreme right is Dakśiñeshvara, and the face between Kalyāñasundaram and Dakśiñeshvara is Iishána. The face on the extreme left is Vámadeva, and the face between Kalyāñasundaram and Vámadeva is Kálágni. The behaviour of Dakśiñeshvara is mildly severe; Iishána is still milder; Kálágni is far more terrible; but in Kalyāñasundaram there is not the least

severity – He is always smiling. Let me explain it in this way: If someone makes a mistake, Dakṣiṇeshvara will say, "Why did you do such a thing? For this, you will be punished." Iśhāna will say, "Why are you doing wrong? Shouldn't you be punished for this?" Kālāgni will say, "Why are you doing wrong? I will give you severe punishment, I won't tolerate these things. Before me this type of excuse is useless!" Vāmadeva will say, "You are such a scoundrel! I will destroy you – I will burn you to ashes!" And Kalyāṇasundaram will laughingly say, "Don't do such things, you yourself will be harmed by this." So Shiva actually had not five faces but one, and that one face had five expressions; thus He is called pañcavaktram.

The unconscious mind is the repository of all qualities, and all the knowledge of the human mind. People, according to their capacity, in wakeful state or in a dreaming state, can bring some portion of the unlimited knowledge of the unconscious mind to the subconscious, and a still smaller portion to the conscious mind. But usually people cannot bring all the unlimited knowledge of the unconscious mind to the subconscious or conscious mind. If anyone can do so, then that action is called "seeing knowledge with the eye of knowledge". This eye of knowledge is called the third eye. Shiva could do this. He was the repository of infinite knowledge, and thus it was imagined that His eye of knowledge, His third eye, was very developed. He is trikāladarśī – the omniscient knower of past, present and future. Thus regarding Him it has been said in the dhyāna mantra, trinetrām – trilocanam ["the three-eyed one"].

13 August 1982, Kashi

Shiva in the Prañāma Mantra (Discourse 20 (continued))

*Namastubhyaṁ Virūpākṣa namaste divyacakṣuṣe;
Namah pinākahastāya vajrahastāya vae namah.
Namastrishūlahastāya daṇḍapāśhāsipāñīye;
Namastraelokyanāthāya bhūtānāṁ pataye namah.
Namah Shivāya śhāntāya kāraṇatrayahetave;
Nivedayāmi cātmānāṁ tvāṁ gatīḥ Parameshvara.*

[Salutations to You, O Virūpākṣa, salutations to the one with divine vision –
Salutations to the one holding the pināka drum and the thunderbolt –
Salutations to the wielder of the trishūla, staff and rope –
Salutations to the lord of the three worlds and the lord of all created beings –
Salutations to Shiva the tranquil, the cause of the three worlds
I surrender myself to You, the culmination of my journey, the Supreme Lord.]

The word virūpākṣa has two meanings. One of the meanings is, "one whose eyes are virūpa – displeased or angry". The second meaning is "a person who looks upon everything with His special expression of sweet benevolence, who views everything with compassion". To the sinful, Shiva is virūpākṣa in the first sense, and to the virtuous He is virūpākṣa in the second sense.

One who possesses divine vision is called divyacakṣu – that is, "one who can see the original hidden cause of everything – the omniscient knower of past, present and future". The one who, by playing His pināka drum, is creating a stir in the bodies, a vibration in the minds, and a thrill in the souls of all creatures is Sadāśhiva. For the punishment of the wicked and the protection of the good, weapons have been used in all ages, and will be used in future. Shiva has been wielding His terrible weapon vajra, the thunderbolt, for the welfare of all. Thus He is not only vajradhara ["the wielder of the thunderbolt"], but shubhavadhara ["the wielder of the thunderbolt of welfare"].

The weapon which pierces sinners from three sides is called trishūla. In Shiva's hand there was a trishūla (so He is called shūlapāñī) to strike terror in the hearts of the sinners so that they might desist from their sins and be forced to let honest people live in peace. And to control the sinners and bind them in tight bondages, Shiva held in His hand a lathi [staff] and a rope.

He is controlling the psychic realm which sustains and nourishes the entire life-flow of heaven, earth and underworld – so He is called Trilokanātha [the Lord of the Three Worlds]. And in this quinquemental world, He clearly understands the nature and behaviour of each and every entity, so He is called Bhūtānātha [the Lord of All Created Beings]. He is also Pramathanātha [the Lord of Music Students]. As Shiva has consummate control over Himself, both internally and externally, He is called

shánta [tranquil]. This tranquil puruśa has the authority to control everything, and that is why regarding Him it has been said, Namah Shiváya shántáya ["Salutations to Shiva the tranquil one"].

In the crude, subtle and causal worlds, the noumenal factor is Citishakti [Consciousness]. Shiva and Citishakti are identical. Thus regarding Him it has been said, káraṇatrayahetave ["the causal factor of the three worlds"]. All entities prostrate before that Supreme Entity which has illuminated the inside and outside of all manifested and unmanifested entities with His own sweet, glorious effulgence; they all totally surrender to Him. He is the culminating point of all the entities, so about Him it has been said, nivedayámi cátmánám tvaṁ gatih Parameshvara ["O Supreme Lord, I surrender myself unto You; You are my supreme shelter"]. "O Shiva, O Parama Puruśa, the last shelter of the shelterless, the final rest of the weary – I surrender all my existential feeling unto Your feet. Besides You I have nothing – without You, I have no existence."

13 August 1982, Kashi

Glossary

ÁCÁRYA or ÁCÁRYÁ. Spiritual teacher qualified to give initiation and teach all lessons of meditation.

AIṆJALI. Offering with joined, upturned palms.

ÁNANDA. Divine bliss.

ANANDA MARGA. Path of divine bliss; Ánanda Márga Pracárika Saríngha (Ananda Marga organization).

APARÁVIDYÁ. Knowledge of the mundane.

ÁRŚA DHARMA. The religion of the Vedic Aryans; the assembled teachings of the RŚIs (árśa is derived from rśi).

ARTHA. Anything (especially wealth) that gives temporary relief from suffering. See also PARAMÁRTHA.

ASURA. An Assyrian tribe. Among the Indo-Aryans, the term took on in addition the derogatory meaning "monsters", and came to be applied by them in this sense to certain non-Aryan peoples.

ÁTMÁ or ÁTMAN. Soul, consciousness, PURUŚA, pure cognition. The átman of the Cosmos is Paramátman, and that of the unit is the jivátman.

ÁTMAJINÁNA. Self-knowledge.

AVADHÚTA or AVADHÚTIKÁ. Literally, "one who is thoroughly cleansed mentally and spiritually"; a monk or nun of an order close to the tradition of SHAEVA TANTRA.

AVATÁRA. Incarnation.

AVIDYÁ. Ignorance. See also VIDYÁ.

ÁYURVEDA. The Vedic system of herbal and natural medicine.

BHÁGAVATA DHARMA. The DHARMA to attain the Supreme.

BHAKTI. Devotion.

BHÁVA. Idea, ideation, mental flow.

BIIJA MANTRA. Acoustic root; particular sound vibration from which a particular type of action stems.

BODHISATTVA. In Buddhism, one who is gradually proceeding to the state of enlightenment, but has not actually become Buddha; or an enlightened being who has voluntarily assumed a worldly form just to maintain a relationship with the external world.

BRAHMA. Supreme Entity, comprising both PURUŚA, or SHIVA, and PRAKRTI, or SHAKTI.

CAKRA. Cycle or circle; psycho-spiritual centre, or plexus. The cakras in the human body are all located along the suśumná canal which passes through the length of the spinal column and extends up to the crown of the head. Some cakras, however, are associated with external concentration points. The concentration points for the cakras: (1) for the múládhára cakra, the base of the spine, above the perineum; (2) for the svádhiśthána, the base of the genital organ; (3) for the maṇipura, the navel; (4) for the anáhata, the mid-point of the chest; (5) for the vishuddha, the throat; (6) for the ájñá, between the eyebrows; and (7) for the sahasrára, the crown of the head. CAÑDÍKÁ SHAKTI. The power of the group mother.

DARSHANA SHÁSTRA. Philosophical treatise.

DEVA. Mythologically, a god, a deity. Philosophically, any vibration, or expression, emanating from the Cosmic Nucleus.

DEVATÁ. Mythologically, a god or goddess. Philosophically, a minor expression of a DEVA, controlled and supervised by the deva. (Deva and devatá are sometimes used interchangeably.)

DEVII. A goddess, a female deity.

DHARMA. Characteristic property; spirituality; the path of righteousness in social affairs.

DHARMACAKRA. Here, Buddha's "wheel of DHARMA".

DHYÁNA. Seventh limb of aśtámga (eight-limbed) yoga; meditation in which the psyche is directed toward Consciousness.

DHYĀNA MANTRA. A Sanskrit verse listing the attributes of a deity, to be used for visualizing that deity in meditation.

EKĀDASHII. "Eleventh" day after the new moon or full moon, days on which fasting is especially advantageous.

GOTRA. Literally, "hill"; clan.

GUṆA. Binding factor or principle; attribute; quality.

PRAKṚTI, the Cosmic Operative Principle, is composed of: sattvaguṇa, the sentient principle; rajoguṇa, the mutative principle; and tamoguṇa, the static principle.

IISHVARA. The Cosmic Controller; literally, "the Controller of all controllers".

INDRIYA. One of the five sensory organs (eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin) or five motor organs (hands, feet, vocal cord, genital organ and excretory organ). The eye indriya (for example) comprises the eye itself, the optical nerve, the fluid in the nerve, and the location in the brain at which the visual stimulus is transmitted to the ectoplasm, or mind-stuff.

ĪŚTA. Goal; one's personal deity or goal in life.

JIVĀTMĀ. See ĀTMĀ.

JIṆĀNA. Knowledge; understanding.

KARMA. Action; sometimes, positive or negative action which produces SAṂSKĀRAS.

LAOKIK. "Of the people", created relatively recently out of popular sentiment and not found in the scriptures.

MAHĀBHĀRATA. "Great India"; the name of a military campaign guided by Lord Kṛṣṇa around 1500 BCE to unify India; the epic poem written by Maharshi Vyasa about this campaign.

MAHĀKAOLA. A Tantric guru who can raise not only his own kuṇḍalinī, but those of others also.

MARGI. A member of Ananda Marga.

MĀYĀ. Creative Principle, PRAKṚTI in Her phase of creation. One aspect of Māyā is the power to cause the illusion that the finite created objects are the ultimate truth.

MOKṢA. Spiritual emancipation, non-qualified liberation.

MUDRĀ. Meaningful gesture.

MUKTI. Spiritual liberation.

NAMAH. Salutations.

NĀTHA. Lord.

NEOHUMANISM. A world-view characterized by love for the Supreme which overflows onto all objects created by the Supreme. Adoption of the Neohumanistic outlook in turn safeguards and enhances the development of one's devotion.

OM, OMĀKĀRA. The sound of the first vibration of creation; the BIIJA MANTRA (acoustic root) of the expressed universe. Omkāra literally means "the sound om".

OTA YOGA. The association of PURUṢOTTAMA with each unit creation individually in PRATISAIṆCARA.

PAORĀṆIK. Puranic, of the PURĀṆAs.

PARAMĀ PRAKṚTI. Supreme Operative Principle.

PARAMA PURUṢA. Supreme Consciousness.

PARAMĀRTHA. Supreme Consciousness; that which gives permanent relief from suffering. See also ARTHA.

PARAMASHIVA. See PURUṢOTTAMA.

PARĀVIDYĀ. Spiritual knowledge, knowledge of the Great.

PRAKṚTI. Cosmic Operative Principle.

PRAṆĀMA MANTRA. Incantation used at the time of salutation to the deity.

PRATISAIṆCARA. In the Cosmic Cycle, the step-by-step introversion and subtilization of consciousness from the state of solid matter to the Nucleus Consciousness. (Prati means "counter" and saiṅcara means "movement".)

PROTA YOGA. The association of PURUṢOTTAMA with all creation in His extroversive movement and with all the unit creations collectively in His introversive movement.

PURĀṆA. Mythological story with a moral import; educative fiction.

PURUṢA. Consciousness.

PURUṢOTTAMA or PARAMASHIVA. The Nucleus Consciousness, the witness of saiṅcara and PRATISAIṆCARA.

QUINQUELEMENTAL. Composed of the ethereal, aerial, luminous, liquid and solid factors, or elements.

RÁMAYĀNA. An epic poem of India. It is the story of King Rama, or Ramchandra.

RÁRĤ. The territory, mostly in Bengal, stretching from the west bank of the Bhagirathi River to the Parasnath Hills.

RASA. Cosmic flow.

RŚI. Sage; one who, by inventing new things, broadens the path of progress of human society.

SADĀSHIVA. SHIVA (literally, "Eternal Shiva").

SĀDHAKA. Spiritual practitioner.

SĀDHANĀ. Literally, "sustained effort"; spiritual practice; meditation.

SAMĀDHI. "Absorption" of the unit mind into the Cosmic Mind (savikalpa samādhi) or into the ĀTMAN (nirvikalpa samādhi).

SAMĀJA. Society.

SAMKALPA. The tendency of the mind to flow extroversively and associate with material objects. See also VIKALPA.

SAMSKĀRA. Mental reactive momentum, potential mental reaction.

SANNYĀSII or SANNYĀSINII. Literally, "one who has surrendered one's everything to the Cosmic will" or "one who ensconces oneself in Sat, the unchangeable entity"; a renunciant.

SATYA. Sat, that which undergoes no change; one of the points of Yama and Niyama (the moral code): the spirit of welfare in the use of words and actions.

SHAEVĀCĀRA. Shiva Cult.

SHAEVA DHARMA. Shaivism (refers to all SHIVA's teachings, both practical and Cosmological).

SHAEVA TANTRA. Shiva Tantra (refers primarily to the practical cult taught by SHIVA).

SHĀKTA. A follower of Shāktācāra, the Shakti Cult; hence, any aspirant who embodies the characteristics of Shāktācāra, especially the judicious application of power.

SHAKTI. PRAKRTI; energy; a deification of Prakrti.

SHĀSTRA. Scripture.

SHIVA. A great Tantric guru of 5000 BCE who guided society while His mind was absorbed in Consciousness; hence, Infinite Consciousness, PURUŚA.

SHIVA-LIUNGA. Linga. Originally a phallic symbol, later given philosophical significance as "the entity from which all things originate".

SHIVOKTI. The saying of Shiva.

SHIVOPADESHA. The instruction of Shiva.

SHIVOTTARA TANTRA. Post-Shiva Tantra.

SHLOKA. A Sanskrit couplet expressing one idea.

SHRUTI. Literally, "ear"; hence, a composition learned by hearing (before the invention of script).

SHŪDRA. The lowermost caste in India, who traditionally live by manual labour.

SHŪNYA. Literally, "void"; a Buddhist concept about the nature of the universe.

TĀNĀDAVA. A vigorous dance for male spiritual aspirants, originally formulated by SHIVA. It develops the glands in a way that enhances courage and fearlessness. When Shiva Himself does this dance (Shiva Natarāja), the dance becomes a metaphor in which Supreme Consciousness sends vibrations throughout the universe and causes all objects of the universe in turn to radiate vibrations.

TANMĀTRA. Literally, "minutest fraction of that," i.e., of a given rudimental factor of matter. Also translated "generic essence" or "inferential wave". The various types of tanmātras convey the senses of hearing, touch, form (vision), taste and smell.

TANTRA. A spiritual tradition which originated in India in prehistoric times and was first systematized by SHIVA. It emphasizes the development of human vigour, both through meditation and through confrontation of difficult external situations, to overcome all fears and weaknesses. Also, a scripture expounding that tradition.

TĀRAKA BRAHMA. Supreme Consciousness in Its liberating aspect.

VAEDYAK SHĀSTRA. The school of medicine founded by SHIVA.

VAEŚŪVĀCĀRA. Viśṇu Cult.

VEDA. Literally, "knowledge"; hence, a composition imparting spiritual knowledge. Also, a religious or philosophical school which originated among the Aryans and was brought by them to India. It is based on the Vedas and emphasizes the use of ritual to gain the intervention of the gods.

VIDYĀ. Knowledge. See also AVIDYĀ.

VIIŪĀ. A musical instrument similar to a sitar or lute.

VIKALPA. The tendency of the mind to withdraw and flow introversively. See also SAMKALPA.

VRTTI. Mental propensity.

YAJIÑA. Ritual sacrifice.

YOGĀ. Spiritual practice leading to unification of the unit ÁTMAN with Paramátman.

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